SPOOKIEST YEARS

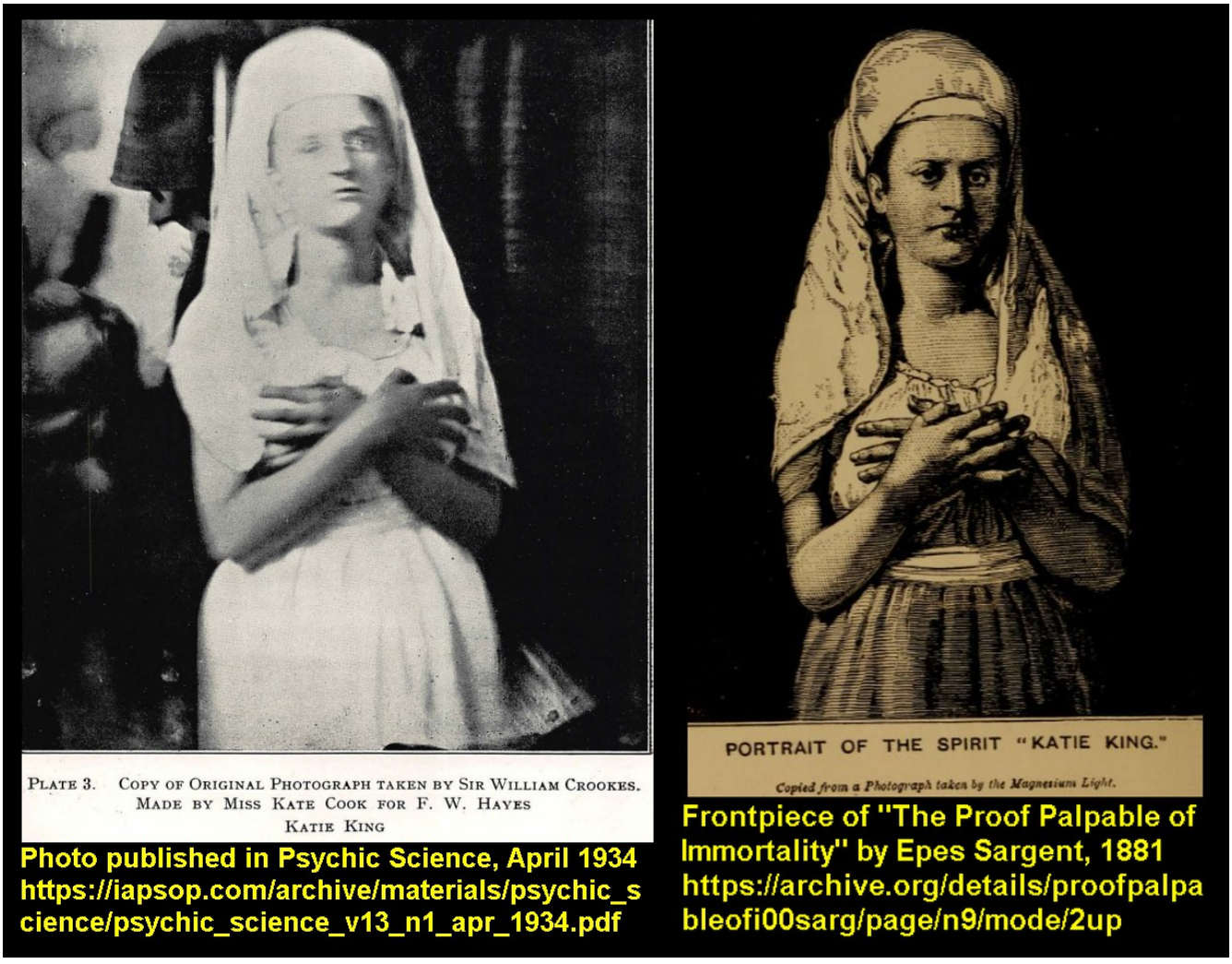
PLATE 3. COPY OF ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY SIR WILLIAM CROOKES. MADE BY MISS KATE COOK FOR F. W. HAYES
KATIE KING
PORTRAIT OF THE SPIRIT "KATIE KING."
Copied from a Photograph taken by the Magnesium Light.
Photo published in Psychic Science, April 1934
https://iapsop.com/archive/materials/psychic_science/psychic_science_v13_n1_apr_1934.pdf
Frontpiece of "The Proof Palpable of Immortality" by Epes Sargent, 1881
https://archive.org/details/proofpalpableofi00sarg/page/n9/mode/2up

Mark Mahin

July 2025

This book consists of posts from my "Future and Cosmos" blog, published between 2023 and 2024, particularly posts on the topic of paranormal phenomena. Some of the most interesting posts are an 18-part series of posts with a title of "Spookiest Years." The posts document paranormal phenomena reported between 1848 and 1909. Because of obscure technical reasons, the 18-part "Spookiest Years" series appears in this book in reverse chronological order, beginning at 1909, and then going backwards to 1848. A reader wishing to read the series in chronological order will need to read the posts in this book in reverse order, from the back of the book to the front.

The most convenient way to read the book is in one-page mode, which you get by clicking on the [] icon at the bottom of the Archive.org file viewer. That way you can conveniently finger-swipe through the whole book. Reading this book using the "native viewer" on www.archive.org, you may find that the links do not work. If you want to follow the links to reach the source material referenced in this book, then download the book as a .pdf file, using the links on the right that allow such a download. The links should work from such a .pdf file.

To read more on these topics see my blog sites:

www.futureandcosmos.blogspot.com
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Future and Cosmos

Our future, our universe, and other weighty topics

Showing posts with label **paranormal phenomena**. Show all posts

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

Did She Foretell Her Own Birth?

I will have a normal-length post on this site tomorrow. For anyone checking in today, I merely have two old news stories that are so gigantically strange-sounding they may be worth your visit at this site today. The first is a very interesting story that appeared in a newspaper in 1913 (click on the image if you have trouble reading it):

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▼ 2025 (61)

▼ July (5)

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The Car With Zoom-in Windows: A Science Fiction Story

Chinese Research Suggesting the Reality of Clairvo...

Scientist Flubs and Flops #8

SETI Scientist Misspoke Sagan-Style

► June (10)

► May (11)

► April (10)

► March (8)

► February (7)

SICILIAN DOCTOR TELLS OF WEIRD INCARNATION

Instance of Death of Young Girl and Birth of Child Much Resembling Her.

Special Cable to The Washington Herald.

Rome, Aug. 16.—The journal "Filosofia della Scienza" publishes a lengthy article by Prof. Calderone dealing with an extraordinary case of "reincarnation" in the family of a Sicilian doctor named Carmelo Samona.

Dr. Samona and his wife lost their five-year-old daughter, Alessandrina. A short time afterward, at a spiritualistic seance, the dead child was alleged to have told her mother that she would be reborn on Christmas day in the following year. At a second seance she announced, "There will be two of us; myself and another."

On Christmas day, fourteen months after the date of the last seance, Signora Samona gave birth to twins, both girls, one of whom bore on the face three marks identical with marks on the face of the dead child, and after a year, commenced to manifest exactly the same moral and physical tendencies.

The two children are now two years old. Prof. Calderone's statements are confirmed and signed by a number of persons who were present at the spiritualistic seances.

The story can be read using the link here:

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045433/1913-08-17/ed-1/seq-5/

The very serious researcher Ian Stevenson MD actually spent years trying to accumulate birthmark evidence for reincarnation, and you can study some of his results here. He claimed weighty evidence about this.

Then there is the "she married a ghost" story reported below (click on the image to more easily read it):

► January (10)

► 2024 (105)
► 2023 (94)
► 2022 (92)
► 2021 (92)
► 2020 (99)
► 2019 (95)
► 2018 (93)
► 2017 (92)
► 2016 (92)
► 2015 (97)
► 2014 (163)
► 2013 (165)

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Chinese Research Suggesting the Reality of Clairvoyance and Mind-Over-Matter

Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans

Some More Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death

Some of the Strangest Deathbed Visions

The Rare Colonization Hypothesis

There Is No "Genetic Architecture of

Mrs. Margaret Simmonds, of London, Who, From All That Can Be Learned, Fell in Love With a Man, Married Him, and Then Discovered He Was Merely a Ghost, Who, Like Most Ghosts, Ultimately Vanished.

The claim appears here:

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn88063294/1943-05-16/ed-1/seq-96/#date1=1756&index

The newspaper page below gives more details about this case of Margaret Simmonds, telling us the source of the account is the very serious philosophy professor C. E. M Joad, a person who was the author of quite a few long and very serious volumes (as you can see here). But alas the story on the page kind of fades away like a vanishing apparition. Only those willing to squint will be able to extract some more details. Apparently the bride's husband soon vanished, never to be seen again; and there were reasons she suspected he was a ghost (such as that she met him at a house reputed to be haunted, and he was none of the invited guests).

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn88063294/1943-05-16/ed-1/seq-104/

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

Notable Posts

- A Table Listing 50 Things Science Cannot Explain
- 30 Reasons for Doubting the "Brains Store Memories" Dogma
- Why We Do Not Understand the Origin of Any Adult Human Being
- A Very Strong Effect of Repeating Patterns in Mysterious Striped Orbs
- They Had Flourishing Minds But Broken Brains
- Paradoxes That Puncture Professorial Pretensions
- Humanity Prerequisites: A Table of 18 Anthropic Requirements
- When World-Class Scientists Saw Ghosts (Part 1)
- The Enigma of Veridical Near-Death Experiences
- When Natural Things Seem to Act in a Shockingly Unnatural Way
- Are Public Schools Teaching a Stealth Religion?
- The Building Blocks of Bad Science Literature
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 Cases
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
- Biological Orthodoxy Flunks the Software Test
- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

Although the story above claims that Professor Joad asserted the story of Margaret Simmonds was "entirely authenticated," I don't know whether the story above is true. But I do know the story line could probably be expanded into a successful romantic comedy movie, perhaps with a title such as "Ghosted." I can also imagine someone turning the story into a courtroom drama. A spouse might be arrested for the murder of a vanished husband, with a defense of "he was only a ghost, so he disappeared." There might be spooky events in the court room (such as a jumping gavel) which might cause the jury to wonder whether the wild story was true.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: paranormal phenomena, reincarnation

Saturday, June 8, 2024

More Accounts of Deathbed Visions

In the 2023 scientific paper here ("A Review of Clinical Signs and Symptoms of Imminent End-of-Life in Individuals With Advanced Illness"), we read this about End-of-Life Dreams and Visions (ELDVs):

"*It is estimated that nearly 50-70% of dying people experience ELDVs (Dam, 2016; Mazzarino-Willett, 2010). While ELDVs often occur when death is imminent within days or hours before death, it is often non-specific and may also occur about weeks or months before death (Depner et al., 2020; Kerr et al., 2014; Levy et al., 2020; Nyblom et al., 2022; Santos et al., 2017).*"

The paper "The Importance of the Exceptional in Tackling Riddles of Consciousness and Unusual Episodes of Lucidity" by Michael Nahm reports the cases below:

"Some time ago, we cited a report about a woman who was completely paralyzed after having suffered serious strokes, but who sat up in her bed, and, apparently perceiving a near-death vision, stretched out her arms, smiled, called the name of her deceased husband, laid back, and died (Nahm et al., 2012). Just lately, I was informed about a very similar case: Here, a man had supposedly become entirely paralyzed due to strokes. Even his facial expression was immobile. Yet, after he had stayed in this vegetative state for one month, he suddenly sat up in his bed, looked at his wife and two sons for a few seconds in turn with an alert expression, smiled, laid back, and died. In another recently published case, a non-responsive patient whose brain stem had been destroyed by cancer suddenly opened her eyes so widely that the white was showing completely around her irises, tracked something moving in the room, looked at her two sisters who stayed at her bed, and died (SCRI, 2022)."

- A "Water Memory" Effect I Have Often Photographed
- 25 Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death
- Why the Origin of Language Is Inexplicable Under Orthodox Assumptions
- Visualizing a Top-Down Theory of Mind and Cosmic Connectivity
- Disastrous Blunders of the Experts
- Cosmic Coincidence Cover-up
- The Gigantic Missing Link of Biological Life
- Cosmic Fine-Tuning Visualized
- Why Machines Will Not Soon Be as Intelligent as Men
- Cloud Computing and the Concept of Non-local Consciousness
- There Is No Plausible Explanation For How Brains Can Store Very Long-Term Memory
- The Top 6 Problems With Using a Multiverse to Explain Cosmic Fitness
- "Vacuum Catastrophe" Should Be Called the Vacuum Miracle
- Why the Origin of Humans Is an Unsolved Mystery
- The Best Basis for Believing in an Afterlife Is Something Other Than Paranormal Phenomena
- Still More Dreams or Visions That Seemed to Foretell a Death
- The Evidence for Out-of-Body Experiences
- GOAL and Soul: Postulating What We Need to Explain Humans
- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

On page 87 of the memoir *Memorials of a Southern Planter*, we have this account:

"James died on the 9th and Thomas on the 15tb of July...James died first, and Sophia, dreading the effect on Thomas, allowed no one to tell him that his playfellow was gone. In dying Thomas called out, 'Oh, I see Jimmy! Oh, gold all around! So beautiful!' "

On page 145 of the book *Contact with the Other World* by James H. Hyslop, we have this account of a deathbed vision:

"It seems their child was dying and a very short time before death told his mother that the teacher (public school teacher) was in the room. The child's mind, so far as they could tell, was clear. The strange part is that a very short time before, perhaps an hour or so, the teacher had suddenly died. Her death was unlooked for and the child knew nothing of it, and so far as I can learn none of those with the child knew of teacher's death."

On page 33 of a volume of the Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research, we have an account of a woman who saw a vaporous form seem to emerge from her father-in-law's body when he died (following the link may require a Google login):

"He smiled , but said nothing, gave a sort of a sigh and puffed his breath out through his lips . The breath seemed to form a cloud , as breath does often in cold weather , and floated upward and away from him . She followed the cloud , which was of no definite shape , for a few seconds with her eyes , and then turned to look down again at Mr . Baldwin and noted a sort of settled look that had come over his face and body . She had seen few people pass out , but felt that he had done so , and she called to Mr. Baldwin, Jr ., her husband , to come in , for she thought their father had died , which proved to be the case."

In the year 2000 book *One Last Hug Before I Go* by Carla Wills-Brandon, we read on pages 12-13 the following account:

"The paramedics had arrived, but Dad and I knew they were too late. I sat there with my mother as she died and watched this gray wisp of vapor leave her body. As it disappeared, I knew Mother was gone."

Similarly on page 215 we hear an account by a nurse who claims to have seen "a white cloud sort of hanging over the woman's bed," a woman who was dying of a terminal illness.

On page 142 of the book we read an account of a woman who in 1995 got a call from her aunt, who described a dream. In the dream the aunt's sister (who died three months earlier) and

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

Other Blogs by This Author

- Head Truth
- Orb Pro

another deceased sister asked the aunt to join them. The aunt said she did not want to. Three days after reporting this dream, the aunt died. On the next page we read a similar account, involving a man who died seven days after having a dream in which his deceased mother and sister ask him to come with them.

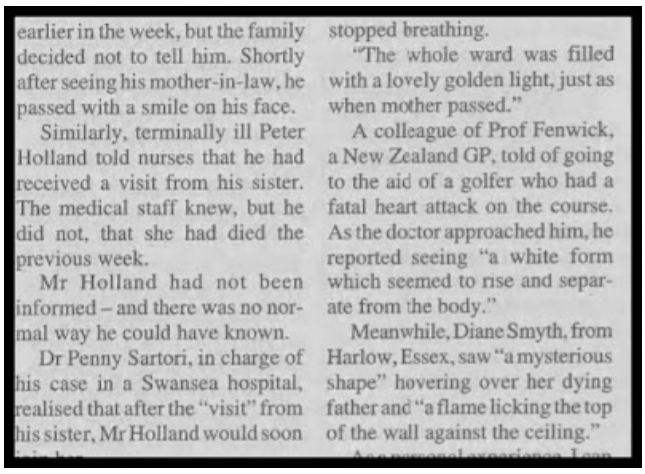
Similarly, on page 163 of the book, we read of an aunt who had a dream of a family gathering that included a son who had died in Vietnam. In the dream somebody asked the son why he was there, and the son said that he was there to take somebody back with him. Very soon later, the aunt's brother died.

Similarly on page 108 of Sir William Barrett's *Deathbed Visions* we read this account:

"He says that at about 3.30 p.m. he and his wife were standing one on each side of the bed and bending over their dying son, when just as his breathing ceased they both saw 'something rise as it were from his face like a delicate veil or mist, and slowly pass away.' He adds, 'We were deeply impressed and remarked, 'How wonderful! Surely that must be the departure of his spirit.' "

One researcher photographed his dying wife, and got some mysterious blobs in his photos that he thought might have been caused by the departure of his wife's soul. You can see some of the photos here.

Below we have accounts from a 2007 newspaper account on deathbed visions, one describing some very interesting paranormal phenomena:



earlier in the week, but the family decided not to tell him. Shortly after seeing his mother-in-law, he passed with a smile on his face.

Similarly, terminally ill Peter Holland told nurses that he had received a visit from his sister. The medical staff knew, but he did not, that she had died the previous week.

Mr Holland had not been informed – and there was no normal way he could have known.

Dr Penny Sartori, in charge of his case in a Swansea hospital, realised that after the "visit" from his sister, Mr Holland would soon stopped breathing.

"The whole ward was filled with a lovely golden light, just as when mother passed."

A colleague of Prof Fenwick, a New Zealand GP, told of going to the aid of a golfer who had a fatal heart attack on the course. As the doctor approached him, he reported seeing "a white form which seemed to rise and separate from the body."

Meanwhile, Diane Smyth, from Harlow, Essex, saw "a mysterious shape" hovering over her dying father and "a flame licking the top of the wall against the ceiling."

The full account can be read here.

The news account here describes a deathbed vision experienced by the famous television and movie star Jack Benny. A moving story of a dying boy's deathbed vision is told here.

External Sites

- Top 20 Cosmology Blogs
- My Free Books on Archive.org

Featured Post

Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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Labels

- "Oumuamua (1)
- 3D printing (1)
- abiogenesis (1)
- abundance (1)
- acupuncture (1)
- after death communication (2)
- age of mankind (1)
- age of universe (3)
- aging (2)
- AI (1)
- alien abductions (2)
- alien attack (1)
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

The 2024 paper "Nurses' encounters with patients having end-of-life dreams and visions in an acute care setting – A cross-sectional survey study" reports this: "Fifty-seven nurses participated from a workforce of 169 (34% response rate), of whom 35 (61%) reported they had encountered end-of-life dreams and visions." We read this:

"A meta-analysis of studies of estimates of patient reports indicated that 77% (95% confidence intervals [CI] 69%–84%) of people dying an 'expected death' may report an ELDV (Hession et al., 2022). Across the world, studies provide consistent findings about ELDV."

The survey gives us these interesting results for the 55 of 57 participants who answered "Yes" to one or more of the survey questions (I will round down the percentages). The percentages seem to refer to anything that the respondents either witnessed themselves or things the respondents observed other people reporting.

- "Visions of dead relatives or religious figures 'collecting' or 'taking away' the dying person": 45%.
- "Visions of dead relatives sitting on or near the patient's bed providing emotional warmth and comfort": 56%.
- "Patients reporting a sense of going back and forth from a different reality during the dying process": 32%
- "Coincidences, usually reported by friends and family of the person who is dying who say that the dying person has visited them at the time of death": 40%.
- "Dying dreams or visions through which the patient seems to be comforted and prepared for death": 38%
- "A comatose patient suddenly becomes alert enough to coherently say goodbye to loved ones at the bedside": 46%.

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
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- antimatter (3)
- apocalypse (5)
- apparition (76)
- apparition acting like a death notification (22)
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- Bible (1)
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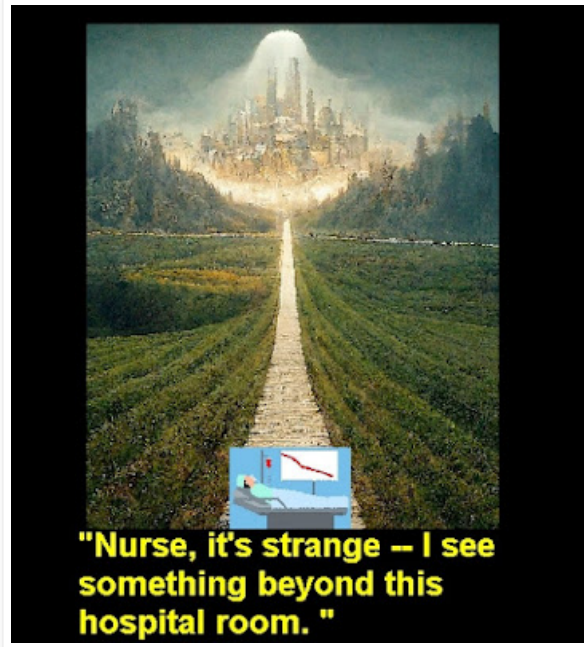
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)



Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: deathbed vision, paranormal phenomena

Friday, May 31, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 18: The Years 1907 - 1909

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here and here) I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1889. Let me pick up the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in the years 1907 to 1909.

The journal *The Annals of Psychical Science* was the English language version of the French journal *Annales des Sciences Psychique*. In the April-June 1909 edition of *The Annals of Psychical Science,* which you can read here, we have some fascinating accounts of paranormal phenomena.

On page 271 we have a paper by Dr. Julien Ochorowicz, describing experiments with the Polish medium Stanislas Tomczyk. We are told on page 274 that all of the experiments were conducted in good light, after Tomczyk was hypnotized by Ochorowicz. There is a very long documented history of paranormal phenomena seeming to occur under hypnosis, with very many reports from respected witnesses of clairvoyance occurring very powerfully under hypnosis. In the paper by Ochorowicz we have a long description of what sounds like telekinetic effects produced on a clock.

Later in the same edition on page 285 we have an account of levitation effects produced during seances with the medium

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
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- brain experiments (2)
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- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
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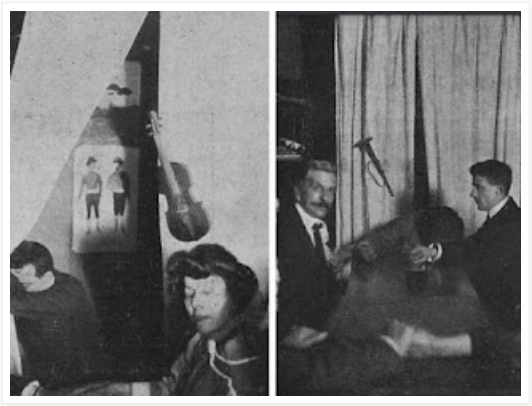
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

Francesco Carancini. The report is preceded by quite a few photographs showing objects floating mysteriously in the air. Below are two of the photos, one (Figure 7 of the paper) seeming to show the levitation of a violin, and the other (Figure 37 of the paper) seeming to show the levitation of a trumpet:



We hear early in the account (page 286) that events such as this were witnessed by very many distinguished observers:

"The experimenters include Professors L. M. Milese, of the U niversity of Rome, V. Tummulo, De Franciscis, Doctor Cesari, and many others, well-known in scientific circles in Rome ; also the Duke of Cardinale, Baron Von Bilgner, Count Violara, Duke of Ayala Muntzer, Marquise Lanza, Countess Paglioni, and other residents of Rome. Several visitors to Rome have also been present at some of the seances: Prof. Schiller of the University of Oxford, M. Serge Yourievitch, Secretary of the Institut Psychologique in Paris, the Hon. Everard Feilding, Hon. Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research in London, Senor Pedroso, Plenipotentiary Minister of Cuba, and M. Mezroculos, Ambassador of Greece."

On page 288 we read this list of phenomena produced in the seances of Carancini:

"*Among the phenomena observed we notice :*

1. Transport and levitation of objects.

2. Impressions on clay.

3. Writing on lamp black in ltalian, Latin, modern and ancient Greek, and in an unknown language resembling Arabic.

4. Luminous phenomena.

5. Dematerialization and rematerialisation of matter."

Here I should note the extreme inaccuracy of statements made by skeptics about paranormal phenomena. You will hear such skeptics say things such as that spooky seance phenomena

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
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- dematerialization (1)
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- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
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- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

always occur in the dark, and that such phenomena never show up in photographs. Such generalizations are not at all true. We see above photographs of apparent levitations occurring in full light, and countless other photos have been taken of levitations. The phenomena of the 19th century medium Daniel Dunglas Home (such as levitations of Home and the playing of musical instruments no one touched) were reported by very many witnesses as occurring in full light. In general, you should follow the rule of "never trust any generalization about paranormal phenomena made by skeptics." Skeptics routinely throw out untrue generalizations about types of phenomena they have not decently studied.

The account of the Carancini sessions gives us the type of high quality evidence that we would like to have, consisting of dated accounts listing all the witnesses who were present. The location was the home of Baron Von Erhardt. Below are some of them (each account includes mention of many spooky phenomena, but I will quote only the most dramatic parts):

- *"Tuesday, May 12th (from 9.30 to II p.m., 1908). Present: Sig. C. Serra, Duca di Cardinale, Fraulein Eliza Miinbher, Baron Bilguer, Doctor Corsi, Prof. Monnosi, Signora Trevisani and daughter, and the medium Carancini.,.. A tambourine played and danced about in mid-air for several seconds... Some photographs were taken with magnesium, among which, that of a violin suspended in the air (see Figure 37) and which fell, without the least noise, to the left of Fraulein Miinbher."*
- *"June 25th, 1908. (32nd Seance.) Present: Sig. Basile, Doctor Corsi, Commander Monnosi, Signora Trevisani and daughter, Baron Von Erhardt and tbe medlinn Carancini....and now the phenomenon of levitation took place ; after a few seconds of hesitation, the heavy table rose gently from the ground, the medium called out 'fire! fire!' (juoco, fuoco), signifying that a photograph of the phenomenon could be taken. Baron Von Erhardt delayed, losing time in finding the spring which lights the magnesium, but, in spite of this delay, the film reproduces the table placed above the shoulders of the medium and the side-board near him. (See Fig. 5.)"*
- *"September 18th, 1908. (45th Seance.) Present : Sig. and Signora Giannini, Sig. and Signora Steffoni, Signora Belloni, Signora Levi, Prof. Monnosi, Sig. Basile, Baron Von Erhardt, Carancini. ..The violin, dancing about in mid-air (in the light and, consequently, distinctly perceived by everyone*

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

present), touched several heads, then fell on to the same big table."

- *"November 20th, 1908. (65th Seance.) Present : Doctor and Signora Cesare; Signora Belloli and daughter; Sig. Giannini and daughter; Prof. Monnosi, the writer, Baron Von Erhardt, Carancini. Phenomena: The big table is levitated on one side and rapped several times, with its legs....The musical box and trumpet are carried from the sideboard, where they were standing, on to the table ; the camera has caught the trumpet in mid-air (see Fig. 7)."*

We are told that the medium was himself levitated, although the photograph fails to capture him being clear of all material support (unlike the photos of the levitated violin and trumpet, which do seem to show them clear of all material support). We read this:

"At the seance held on the evening of November 27th, 1908, the phenomenon of the levitation of the medium occurred; he was levitated to the height of one yard, a phenomenon distinctly visible to the spectators; the controllers verified all absence of support from the table or chair. Unfortunately, the photograph (Fig. 35) does not show the medium's feet, nor testify to this complete absence of normal support vouched for by the controllers. We reproduce it, nevertheless, for the benefit of our readers.."

In the next two editions of the *The Annals of Psychical Science* (here and here) Dr. Julien Ochorowicz, continues to describe experiments with the Polish subject Stanislawa Tomczyk. We have quite a few photos of her performing levitations on small objects. Below is Figure 5, entitled "Levitation of a magnet."

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

On page 334 of the edition here, the July- September 1909 edition of *The Annals of Psychical Science*, Ochorowicz reports telekinetic phenomena and possibly teleportation phenomena occurring around Stanislawa Tomczyk: "Several objects were brought from a room on the ground floor, a handful of snow fell on to the table, a metal seal was put into my pocket, a piece of charcoal was thrown at us from the stove, over three yards away, the large clock hanging on the wall was opened and stopped, the cord of an electric bell was shaken about and pressed and the bell set ringing, etc." Using the word "apport" which may refer to a mysterious appearance, Ochorowicz states this on page 372: "The apport of a dumb-bell, weighing two pounds, was effected yesterday without fatigue to a distance of more than three yards, and a handful of snow was brought from outside, by request, through closed doors."

Later in the same edition of *The Annals of Psychical Science*, we read a report on tests with the Italian medium Eusapia Palladino. The amount of time that Palladino was investigated by scientists was enormous. On page 401 we read "Eusapia Paladino gave forty-three sittings to the Institut General Psychologique during the years 1905, 1906, and 1907." Skeptics always try to to dismiss the case of Palladino by pointing out cases in which she broke rules she was supposed to follow, claiming that such cases were cheating. There is a reason why such claims have little relevance.

It was well-known by all her investigators that Eusapia would frequently break rules she was told to follow, if she was allowed to do so. There are various possible explanations for particular events of this type: (1) possibly she didn't understand the concept of needing to follow experimental rules, or (2) she might have been trying to trick people, or (3) she might have been often unable to follow rules because of being in a state of trance in which rule-following can't be expected. Whatever the reason was for her failure to follow experimental rules if allowed to do so, all of her main experimenters knew that she could not be counted on to willfully follow such rules; so they followed a habit of testing her under strict conditions in which cheating was impossible. It was under such strict "cheat-proof" conditions that Palladino's most spectacular results were very often obtained. The fact is that many different experimenters tested Palladino under conditions in which cheating was not possible, and under such conditions all kinds of astonishing paranormal effects were observed. Such paranormal effects were observed by many observers in good light, and very often photographed. The observers were very often scientists and medical men, many of whom seemed to hate observing what

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

they observed. The observers included very distinguished figures such as Marie Curie.

On page 404 of the publication, we have this account of paranormal effects occurring in the presence of Eusapia under tightly controlled conditions that should have made cheating impossible.

"The two hands, feet, and knees of Eusapia · being controlled, the table is raised suddenly, all four feet leaving the ground, then two and again four feet; Eusapia closes her fists, and holds them towards the table, which is then completely raised · from the floor five times in succession, five raps being also given. It is again completely raised, whilst each of Eusapia's hands is on the head of a sitter. It is raised to the height of one foot from the floor and suspended in the air for seven seconds while Eusapia kept her hand on the table and a lighted candle was placed under the table; it was completely raised to a height of ten inches from the floor and suspended in the air for four seconds, M. Curie only having his hand on the table, Eusapia's hand being placed on top of his. It was completely raised when M. Curie had his hand on Eusapia's knees and Eusapia had one hand on the table and the other on M. Curie's hand, her feet tied to the chair on which she was sitting. Two and then four feet of the table were raised when a weight of ten kilogrammes was placed on the table, the hands, feet, and knees of Eusapia being thoroughly controlled. It was completely raised when touched by no one, not even Eusapia, she being under perfect control."

Again we have a report of the complete levitation of an untouched table, something that occurs in great abundance in the literature of the 19th century and early twentieth century, with very many distinguished observers reporting such an effect.

On the next pages in this edition of the A*nnals of Psychical Science* (the July- September 1909 edition) we have these reports of paranormal effects occurring around Eusapia:

- "At another complete levitation, all standing up, the table rose to eighteen inches from the floor: someone asked the table to break: one leg was broken" -- page 405.
- Both a curtain and Eusapia's gown "swelled out" as if blown by some supernatural wind -- page 406.
- A variety of objects were mysteriously moved around or mysteriously broken -- page 407.
- "A three-legged wooden table, placed at a distance of a yard from Eusapia, and connected with a registering apparatus, came forward or went backwards at

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

Eusapia's command; it was even pushed and thrown against the wall, Eusapia's feet being tied by laces to the legs of her chair." -- page 407.

- Various reports of witnesses being touched as if by invisible hands -- page 408.
- "Blueish phosphorescent lights appeared and disappeared in turn about Eusapia's forehead, on her right side, on the black background of the curtain, and on the table." -- page 408.
- "Lights were rising out of the centre of Eusapia's body" -- page 408.
- "Two very bright luminous specks appeared over Eusapia's head" -- page 409.
- "Forms of hands, luminous fingers, were seen at the same time that contacts were felt." -- page 409.
- "Eusapia succeeded at discharging at a distance three electroscopes of different construction" -- page 412.

There are very many distinguished witnesses in many different years who claimed to have seen the most inexplicable and paranormal phenomena in the presence of Eusapia Palladino. To read long accounts, you can read my posts here and here. On page 556 of a 1907 edition of *The Annals of Psychical Science*, we read this about scientific investigation of Eusapia Palladino:

"*Naples. They have been perhaps more important than all that have preceded them, because conducted under even more severe scientific control. These seances took place in the laboratory of Professor Ph. Bottazzi, Director of the Physiological Institute in the University of Naples. There were also present, Dr. G. Galeotti, Professor of General Pathology in the University of Naples; Dr. T. De Amicis, Professor of Dermatology and Syphilography at the same University, Dr. o. Scarpa, Professor of Electro-Chemistry at the Polytechnic School in Naples; M. E. Jona, Senator, President of the Italian Electro. Technical Association; Dr. A. Cardarelli, Senator, Professor of Clinical Medicine in the University of Naples; M. N. Minutillo, Professor of Jurisprudence in the University. Mme. Bottazzi was also present at two seances, in the course of which mediumistic faculties revealed themselves in her-which disturbed her considerably.* ***By the light of three lamps the table round which the experimenters were seated was seen to rise as high as nearly half a yard (40c.) or to float in the air untouched, without any contact with Eusapia, for about twenty-five minutes; then apparitions of hands began, and of black heads, etc."***

For a book length account of such phenomena, you can use the link here to read "Eusapia Palladino and Her Phenomena" by

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

Hereward Carrington. Accounts of paranormal phenomena occurring around Eusapia Palladino sometimes appeared in mainstream newspapers. Using the links below, you can read a lengthy 1907 account of the investigations of Eusapia Palladino, which appeared in the mainstream Washington D.C. newspaper *The Evening Star* (a paper I once delivered to subscribers when I was a boy). The account says that several types of dramatic paranormal phenomena were witnessed by hundreds.

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1907-09-22/ed-1/seq-37/

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1907-09-22/ed-1/seq-38/

In 1910 there appeared the following newspaper account about one of the mediums discussed above:

EXTRAORDINARY POWER OF A MEDIUM

THE scientific world of Europe has been much interested in the experiments made by Doctor Ochorowicz of Paris, and Wiela of Illenia, with Mlle. Stanislawa Tomczyk, a medium who has extraordinary magnetic qualities. When hypnotized, Mlle. Tomczyk has the remarkable power of being able to levitate any objects she chooses. In one set of experiments a glove was put on the table in front of her, and at her bidding it rose, curved over from the middle, and went high up into the air, to drop gently into the lap of the person indicated. The same sort of thing she did with a magnet, as well as a pair of scissors, a match-box, and a note-book, the pages of which had turned over in accordance with her directions. Still more striking was one of the experiments with scales. She asked that the scales should be fastened to the bottom of the gas-bracket. This done, an egg-shaped marble paper-weight was placed in one of the pans, and a celluloid ball in the other. By merely placing her hands near the paper-weight she caused that pan to rise until it was on a level with the one containing the light celluloid ball. It need hardly be said that elaborate steps were taken to prove that Mlle. Tomczyk had no wires concealed on her person.

I could have made a Part 19 for this "Spookiest Years" series by using material from my two posts below. But rather than repeating such material, I will merely refer the reader to such posts:

Early 20th Century Evidence for Paranormal Phenomena

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

More Early 20th Century Evidence for Paranormal Phenomena

Postscript: Below is another spooky account from the middle of this 1907-1909 time period:

CHICAGO WOMAN STANDS IN WITH A CHILD SPOOK

This Little Spirit Guides Her to Tennessee and Big Money

Under Flat Stone Woman Finds Gold and Currency in Plenty

Remarkable Psychic Phenomenon···Looking for Owner of Money

Chicago, Ill., Sept. 5.—W. J. Clark, 409 North Fifty-second avenue, and his sister, Mrs. Frank W. Gulliford, wife of the general night superintendent of Swift & Co.'s Chicago packing plant, returned yesterday from Chattanooga, Tenn., bringing a package containing a large roll of currency and a quantity of gold coin they had found in a lonely spot in the outskirts of that city, buried underneath a huge flat stone.

Fear that some needy person would be the loser of his rightful property by her possession of this money, induced Mrs. Gulliford and her brothers to make public last night the fact that they had found it.

Guided to Spot by Spirit.

Mrs. Gulliford and her brother told a strange story. They said the journey of 1,000 miles was made because of the promptings of a little child named "Martha," who is known only in the psychic or spirit world. This spirit child, Mrs. Gulliford says, guided her to the spot where the money was found.

The story told by Mrs. Gulliford is almost without a parallel in the history of psychic phenomenon, nothing more remarkable of its kind has ever been recorded in the annals of the society for psychic research whose business is the investigation of occult phenomena.

The story of Mrs. Gulliford's trip was confirmed by her husband. He accepts the story of her strange guidance as true and explainable.

You can read account at the link below:

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85042242/1908-09-06/ed-1/seq-1/

Posted by Mark Mahin at 6:00 AM No comments:

Labels: apports, levitation, mediums, paranormal phenomena, psychokinesis, teleportation

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 17: The Years 1885-1889

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here and here) I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1880. Let me pick up

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

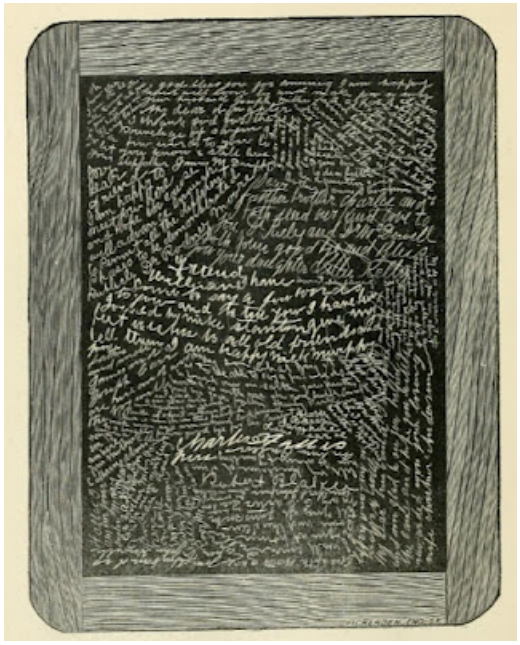
the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in the years 1885 to 1889.

In the year 1885 the periodical *Golden Gate* had in its August 1 edition on page 4 a report of the phenomenon of slate writing, the mysterious appearance of writing on clean slates. A writer describes a visit to the home of a young medium named Fred Evans. We read this:

"Two slates were taken, and ...they were cleaned with a wet sponge and wiped dry, to show that they had not been prepared in any way. They were then placed together, with a number of bits of pencil between, and sealed with sealing wax at the edges, all under the supervision of a committee, of which the writer was one, and who placed a private mark upon each slate whereby he could not be deceived in the matter of their identification. The Committee then placed their hands upon the slates, along with those of Mr. Evans and Miss Hance. Soon the pencil tips were heard fluttering between the slates.. Mr. Evans then took the sealed slates and held them successively upon the shoulder of each person present. The writing could be heard almost instantly. Thus messages were written to every one present excepting two, including two messages to the writer, numbering fourteen messages in all, all written in different hands, and generally in facsimile of the writing of the persons they were supposed to represent. The messages were written in patchwork form all over the surface of the lower slate, some of them so small that they could be covered with a dime, and so finely written that they could scarcely be deciphered.
Each message was a test of spirit identity to the person to whom it was written, and some of them were of a very surprising character. At the conclusion of the writing the seals were found intact, and were broken by the writer, the messages appearing within as stated."

The editor of the *Golden Gate* (James J. Owen) would eventually write a book on the mysterious slate writing observed in the presence of Fred Evans, a book that can be read online using the link here. On a page of that book we have an example produced in one of the sessions with Evans, where we see something matching the description above:

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)



On page 16 of he book Owen says he had "had hundreds of experimental seances with this psychic [Fred Evans]." On the same page he recalls " one instance where some twelve hundred words were finely written over the surfaces of two large slates in what seemed to us an incredibly short space of time." On the same page Owen states this, "We have often, in his presence, sent out our thoughts to the spirit we would like to communicate with, and straightway the message would appear under our hands, and frequently in writing identical with that of the mortal whose spirit we had evoked."

In the next two pages Owen claims that Fred Evans was in touch with two spirits, one named John Gray, and another an artist spirit named Stanley St. Clair. On page 18 Owen states this:

"The frequent writing in colors that appears upon the slates, and that apparently without the use of colored crayons, is a most mysterious phase of this phenomenon. We have obtained as many as thirty-three shades of colors on a single slate. This color writing, we are aware, is not peculiar to Mr. Evans' guides alone, but we have never known a psychographist through whom the colors came in such great variety and profusion."

On the same page Owen states this:

"We called at the residence of Mr. Evans on Tuesday evening, December 27, 1892, when, under the usual crucial conditions, a personal message was written to the author, signed by eleven of his friends in spirit life, and all in different shades of color — some of them most delicate and exquisite. There were in all twelve shades of color upon the slate. The writing was produced

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

under our own hands, no mortal hand touching the slate except those of the writer and his wife. The names and message are all of a personal character, but its chief merit to investigators is in the variety of colors, and the fact that they are written over a cross first placed upon the slate with a common slate pencil, to show that there was no false bottom to, or chemical preparation of, the slate, as jugglers or skeptics are disposed to assert."

On page 25 of the book we have this statement (signed by three witnesses) of seemingly paranormal events occurring in 1885:

"We, the undersigned committee, chosen by the audience at a public exhibition of independent slate-writing, given by Mr. Fred Evans at Washington Hall, on Sunday, June 21, 1885, testify that the slates used were washed and sealed in our presence and to our satisfaction, and during the time the slates were in use they were not removed from our sight. We distinctly heard the fragments of pencil between the slates writing, whilst holding them in our hands. When the writing was finished, which was denoted by three raps on the slates, Mr. R. B. Hall was selected by the audience to break the seals on the slates. When separated, one of them was completely covered with writing in patchwork form, embracing thirty communications, all in different handwriting. Each member of the Committee received messages signed by relatives or departed friends; the remainder of the messages was recognized by different persons in the audience. The exhibition was given in daylight before an audience of about 400 persons, and under conditions which excluded all chance of trickery or fraud.

Dr. Thos. C. Kellev, 946 Mission St.

Mrs. F. C. Lane, 3010 Folsom St.

William Kelly, 202 Second St."

On pages 28-29 of the book, we get an account telling us Fred Evans did very well in public tests of the slate writing phenomenon, tests held in San Jose, California before a large audience that included writers from newspapers. We are told that the San Jose News wrote up an account on March 14, 1887, and that the San Jose Times wrote up an account on March 15, 1887. I cannot find the editions for these dates, but would like to do so.

But on the front page of the May 8, 1886 edition of *Golden Gate*, we do have an account of a meeting with Fred Evans occurring on April 2, 1886. We are told the following:

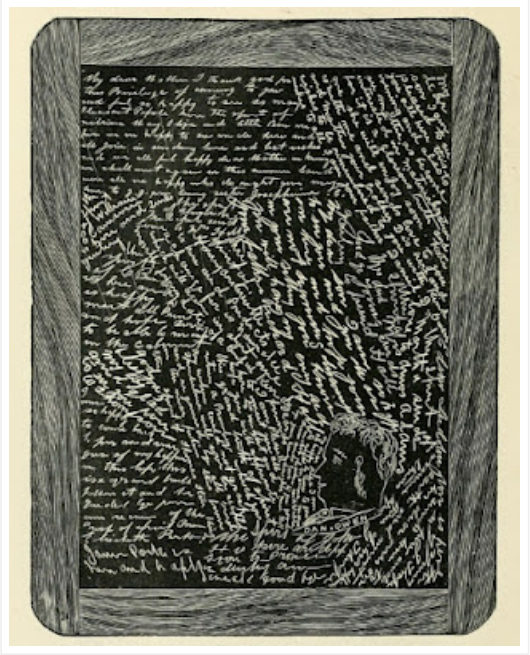
"*There were present at this seance fourteen persons in all, besides the medium and his wife. Six of those present were entire*

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

strangers to the medium, who also had no previous knowledge as to the proposed attendance of any members of the circle, with the exception of the writer and two others. There were no ballots written, and care was taken that the names of the strangers present should not be made known to the medium. Therefore no introductions were had; nevertheless, all present, except two, received messages upon the slate, some receiving two and three. The names given of the spirit friends of the persons unknown to the medium, is a most convincing test of spirit power.

The manner of the writing was as follows: A committee of two was appointed to see that the slates were properly cleaned and sealed. This was done first by thoroughly rubbing the slates with a damp cloth, and then, after placing a few minute bits of pencil between them, they were sealed together with sealing-wax at the edges. The committee then tied a cord around the slates and hung them to the gas jet in the center of the room. In a few moments the rapid moving of the pencil tips was distinctly heard, and in about four minutes light rapping announced that the writing was completed. The committee then removed the cord and seals, when the inner surface of one of the slates was found written over, as seen above."

The paper has the image below, which it says is a facsimile of what was found on a slate. The image is reproduced on page 50 of the Owens book. We are told Evans never touched the slate.

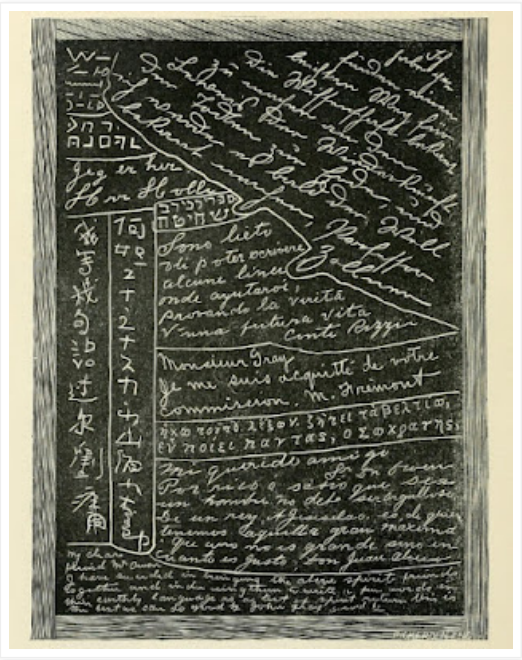


Owen states that on September 25, 1886 he observed a blank slate that seemed to mysteriously receive writing in more than nine different languages. We read this:

" He [Evans] then handed the slate to us, and we (Mrs. Owen and the writer) were both fully satisfied that there was no

writing upon the slate. From that moment the slate never left our hands, nor was it for an instant out of our sight. A small bit of slate pencil was placed upon the table, and we placed the slate over it, with our four hands resting thereon. Mr. Evans, sitting upon the opposite side of the table, touched the outer edge of the slate frame for a few moments, and then removed his hands entirely. In about five minutes loud raps signalled that the writing was finished. We raised the slate and found the under side covered as seen in the engraving."

We are told that the result was the slate shown below.



On page 45 we are given this translation of the writings:

***"German** — I have found an easy way for making known to science the proof of the return of the dead to this earth, and I shall soon give it to the world. Professor Zollner.*

***Italian**— I am glad to be able to write you a few lines to aid in proving the truth of a future life. Count Rozzia.*

***French** — Monsieur Gray. — I have acquitted myself of your commission. M. Fremont.*

***Greek** — I come to say this — seek for better things — think well of all. Socrates.*

***Spanish** — My Dear Friend, Sr. Don Orven: — Rich or wise as a man may be, don't let him be proud. It is from a King, Agesilaus, we have that grand maxim, 'that one is not great only as far as he is just.' Don Juan Alviso.*

***Norwegian**— I am here. — Herr Holle.*

***Chinese** — I write a few words for you. — Lu Yeun.*

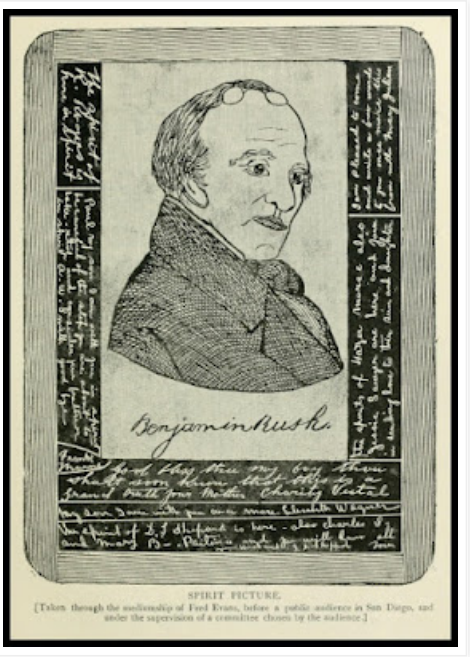
Japanese *— How do you do? — Oyama Centura.*

Hebrew *— [This is a name of a book, describing the killing of animals according to the Jewish rites.]"*

We are told on page 48 that the young Evans knew none of these languages.

On page 4 of the June 4 1887 edition of *Golden Gate*, we have an account of a session with Fred Evans that occurred only several days earlier, on May 27, 1887. We are told, "The most remarkable seance for independent slate-writing we ever witnessed occurred on Friday morning, May 27th, in presence of the eminent scientist. Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace, his brother, Mr. John Wallace, of Stockton, Dr. David Wooster, one of our leading physicians and a member of the Academy of Sciences, and the writer— four persons in all besides the medium, Mr. Fred Evans." We are told, "The slates were all thoroughly cleaned and examined by the brothers, and were, from, first to last, directly under their hands and sight." We are told, "All being done in the light and above board, with the slates in the hands of the investigator, there is not the slightest suggestion or possibility of deception." We have a quote from Alfred Russel Wallace saying, "I have never on any occasion witnessed phenomena of so wonderful a character appear with such rapidity and in a manner so entirely free from suspicion," and a quote from his brother saying, "I agree with the above remarks of my brother."

Pages 61-92 of Owen's book deals with a tour Fred Evans took (accompanied by Owen) throughout cities and towns of southern California in the spring of 1887. We read quite a few newspaper quotes by reporters who sound impressed after attending public exhibitions in which mysterious slate writing was witnessed in the presence of Evans, sometimes before an audience of hundreds. We are given this example of the mysterious output, which we are told was produced under test conditions under the direction of a committee. The figure depicted is Benjamin Rush, a figure in early American history. A person looking at the Wikipedia.org article on Benjamin Rush will see that the portrait and the signature are close to those shown in that article.



SPIRIT PICTURE.

[Taken through the mediumship of Fred Evans, before a public audience in San Diego, and under the supervision of a committee chosen by the audience.]

Later in the book we have an extensive account of Fred Evan's journey to Australia, where he underwent extensive testing before committees and audiences in places like Melbourne. On page 180 this impressive-sounding testimony is quoted:

"Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, May 8, 1889.

We, the undersigned, do hereby testify that we and each of us have investigated the phenomenon of independent slate-writing, occurring through the mediumship of Mr. Fred Evans, of San Francisco, Cal., U. S. A., and have obtained writing on the inner surfaces of slates that we and each of us have furnished ourselves, and which were not for a moment permitted to leave our sight.

The messages appearing thereon were always signed by the names of our departed relatives and friends, and information given that we are sure the medium could not have had any previous knowledge of whatever.

Whilst many of us are not Spiritualists, yet we and each of us agree that the messages appearing between our slates were placed there by some invisible intelligent power, independent of the medium.

SIGNATURES.

John Williams, Grain Dealer, Stock Street, Coburg, Victoria.

Edwin Gill, Justice of Peace, Balaclava, Victoria.

James T. Praagst, Government Land Office, E. Melbourne, Victoria.

R. Stewart, Esq., Bourke Street, Melbourne, Victoria.

Charles C. Bell, Esq., 4 Gordon Terrace, Mary Street, St. Kilda, Victoria.

John Carson, Esq., Kew, Victoria.

W. B. Rodier, Justice of Peace, ' Rougemont,' St. James' Park, Hawthorn.

John Henshaw, Manufacturer, Council Street, Clifton Hill, Victoria.

Thomas Martin, Manufacturer, 122 Rokeby Street, Collingwood, Victoria.

Richard Bond, Builder, Carpenter Street, Middle Brighton, Victoria.

Wm. Overton, Esq.

John Melville, Accountant, 24 Shiel Street, N. Melbourne, Victoria.

William Jackson, Builder, Armadale, Victoria.

E. Sharpe, Illawarra Road, Hawthorn, Victoria.

Daniel Clay, 33 Michael Street, N. Fitzroy, Victoria.

M. Bond, Middle Brighton, Victoria.

William Brown, 47 Napier Street, E. Melbourne, Victoria.

E. L. Melville, Shell Street, North Melbourne, Victoria.

E. Overton, Melbourne, Victoria."

On page 182 we have an equally enthusiastic testimony by an equally long list of named witnesses living around Sydney, Australia. The witnesses state, "We are satisfied that the manifestations of spirit or direct writing witnessed by us through your mediumship were beyond the possibility of fraud or deception."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 6:00 AM No comments:

Labels: paranormal phenomena, slate writing

Monday, April 29, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 16: The Years 1879 -1880

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very

spooky events reported between 1848 and 1878. Let me pick up the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in the years 1879 to 1880.

On page 65 of the February 7, 1879 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an interesting account of an apparition of the living. We read this:

" I have myself had an exceedingly interesting experience of the apparition of the living, viz., my own appearance at the supposed death-bed of my sister, when we were three thousand miles apart. She was attended on this particular night by another sister, who distinctly saw me go into the room, and lean over my darling young sister. The latter was too ill to speak, but she whispered, 'Mary is here, now I'm happy.' I ought to mention that my elder sister is not given to visions, and is indeed a very practical, matter-of-fact person; but she has always since declared that she saw me from my knees up, and the very dress was plain to her too. At this time I was just recovering after my confinement with my son, who is nearly seventeen. He was between four and five weeks old, when one night I fell asleep, thinking how much I wished to see this sister. I knew of her illness, and that she was not expected to recover, and of her intense desire to see me. Between us the most tender attachment had always existed, and it was thought that her illness had been much increased through her grief at our separation. The previous summer, when we came from the United States to this country, I had purposely kept from her and my mother the knowledge of my expected confinement, and they were only informed after the birth of the child in a letter from my husband. I mention all this to show how impossible it was for me to go to her, as she intensely desired. On the night referred to I had a most vivid dream of seeing her, in a bed not in her own room, and of seeing my other sister in attendance. I leaned over her and said, as I thought, 'Emma, you will recover.' I told my husband I had been home when I woke, and my impression that she would recover. This dream comforted me very much, and from this night there was a change for the better with my sister, and she gradually recovered from what was supposed to be an incurable illness. When we came to compare dates, we found that my dream and my appearance to my two sisters occurred at as nearly as possible the same time. I was so lifelike to my younger sister that she thought I had really arrived on a visit; but, as I said before, to my elder sister I was shadowy below my knees, but perfectly natural in appearance. She afterwards remembered that I did not notice her as I passed into the inner room, although in my dream I saw her, nor did I seem to see anything but the one object of my love."

Although reports such as this are very rare, there are other similar cases in the literature of parapsychology. See my post here for other examples of people reporting apparitions of the living.

On page 86 of the February 21, 1879 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account of a child who seemed to experience spontaneous clairvoyance alerting her of the death of her father. We read this:

"A party of children, sons and daughters of the officers of artillery stationed at Woolwich, were playing in the garden. Suddenly a little girl screamed, and stood staring with an aspect of terror at a willow tree there. Her companions gathered round, asking what ailed her. 'Oh !' she said, ' there—there. Don't you see ? There's papa lying on the ground, and the blood running from a big wound.' All assured her that they could see nothing of the kind. But she persisted, describing the wound and the position of the body, still expressing her surprise that they did not see what she saw so plainly. Two of her companions were daughters of my informant (one of the surgeons of the regiment), whose house adjoined the garden. They called their father, who at once came to the spot. He found the child in a state of extreme terror and agony, took her into his house, assuring her that it was only ' a fancy,' and having given her restoratives, sent her home. The incident was treated by all as being what the doctor had called it, and no more was thought of it. News from India, where the child's father was stationed, was in those days slow in coming. But the arrival of the mail in due course brought the information that the father of the child had been killed by a shot, and died under a tree. Making allowance for difference in the counting of time, it was found to have been about the moment when the daughter had the vision at Woolwich."

On page 6 of the March 15, 1879 edition of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal,* we have a letter by William Pinnock describing a spooky event involving the death of his daughter. Her husband was five hundred miles away, and after the daughter died, he was summoned by telegraph. The father states this:

"On the arrival of her husband, he, with three relatives, went into the room to see the remains of his wife, and while standing viewing the body, with his head resting on the shoulder of his brother, tears were seen to gush from her eyes, and upon being wiped away, came again and again, and the eyelashes had the wet appearance of those of a living person, who had been weeping. This occurred five days after death, and when the body was frozen for preservation."

You could probably write a small book entitled "Paranormal Tears" that would describe all similar reports, many of which would involve people reporting weeping statues, with many witnesses reporting such an effect occurring from the same statue.

On page 6 of the April 12, 1879 edition of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal,* we have this account of what seems like an early near-death experience:

"*A curious incident is related by the Mineral Point (Wis.) Tribune. It appears from that paper, that Mrs. Ellen Ryan, of Ridgeway, died recently in her first confinement. She had been married but a year when her babe was born dead, and buried. A short time after the mother, to all appearance, died also; she was straightened out, and the mourners were busy making preparations for arraying the corpse in the habiliments of the grave, when in half an hour after her death, or supposed death, to the consternation of all, she opened her eyes, and in a loud, clear tone called for her husband. He came, when she told him that she had been to another world—to heaven; that she had passed through a dark alley to get there, and had recognized there her mother, (who has been dead some time) and her babe; and described in glowing language the place as being exceedingly beautiful, and that at half-past twelve she would again depart, and wished to be buried in her bridal clothes, and that her babe should be taken up, dressed in its best clothes, and laid on her arm, with her bridal veil thrown over their faces. At half-past twelve, precisely, she died, and all her directions were implicitly followed.*"

The claim by the woman to have "passed through a dark alley" to get to heaven where she saw deceased relatives reminds me of the claim so often made in recent decades by people having near-death experiences: the claim that they passed through a kind of dark tunnel before reaching some otherworldly realm in which deceased relatives were encountered.

Also on page 6 of the April 12, 1879 edition of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal,* we have this account by Elizabeth Bull:

"Suddenly I noticed in a corner of the room a small oval mass of misty whiteness....It rapidly increased in size until several feet in height; growing gradually dense and more opaque, and slowly opening, it revealed the glorified form of my dear sister. I say glorified, since language utterly fails to convey any idea of that lovely wondrous vision. She had died in her twenty third year of lingering consumption, ten years before; and had borne great suffering with Christian fortitude, joyfully looking for speedy release. Unselfish and lovable, a beautiful soul fitly clothed, she

gradually wasted under the fell disease, and died at length in my arms. But now I saw her again—all traces of lingering disease had vanished, she looked radiantly beautiful as, holding back the surrounding envelope, she leaned towards me, the dear sweet eyes gazing into mine with a look of unutterable love. She wore a long, loose robe of dazzling whiteness, hanging about her in graceful folds, and there emanated from her a mellow, soft light, making the encrusting shell glitter like crystal. So gloriously beautiful was the appearance that I could not gaze upon It without pain, nor do I think that natural eyes could have seen it; but so soon as I had thoroughly realized this angelic presence she gradually drew the encircling mass about her, and ever steadfastly regarding me, was gradually hidden from view, the luminous envelope clouded, darkened slowly, shrank, and disappeared."

On page 186 of the April 18, 1879 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account by six signed witnesses that they saw on March 31, 1879 the materialization (the mysterious appearance) of a spirit named Lillie, at a seance of a medium identified as "Miss Cook." This seems to have been Kate Cook, the sister of the famous medium Florence Cook. The account includes a description that seems to rule out any possibility of fraud, if you assume the truthfulness of the account. Similar accounts involving the same Kate Cook and the same mysterious Lillie are given on page 157-159 of the October 3, 1879 edition of *The Spiritualist (*with the very detailed account being of observations made a few weeks earlier), on page 226 of the November 7, 1879 edition of *The Spiritualist,* on page 62 of the February 6, 1880 edition of *The Spiritualist,* and on page 18 of the July 19, 1880 edition of *The Spiritualist*.

On page 6 of the May 10, 1879 edition of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, we have an account by a doctor who experienced a type of event that Raymond Moody has called a shared-death experience. We read this account:

"Early one morning I was called to attend a man who had attained some prominence as a speculator and operator in real estate. He had been discovered lying upon the floor of his lodgings in a dying condition from his knife wounds, the horrible instrument of his death still remaining where it had been thrust into his body to the hilt, penetrating through the right lung. There were evidences of desperate struggle haying occurred before the unfortunate man yielded to his fate. He was entirely unconscious in the spasmodic grips of death, and he breathed his last in a very few moments after I reached the spot. As his last breath went out I became conscious of a new and mysterious presence, and my mind seemed to pass under the control of a superior mental power. I yielded a passive

obedience to the influence, and immediately the scene of a death struggle passed before my mental view. It seemed for an instant as if I was myself endeavoring to ward off a murderous attack. With one hand my assailant held a suffocating grip upon my throat, while with the other he plunged the deadly knife again and again into my body. I saw his clenched teeth, and his fierce, cruel eyes gleaming into mine with the malignancy of a demon. Such was the force and horror of the impression that I staggered and fell as if in a faint. The by-standers, who were inured to sanguinary scenes, supposed that I had been overcome by the spectacle of the murdered man, and their comments were anything but complimentary to my nerve and experience as a physician. But the cool and careful manner In which I subsequently performed the autopsy dissipated what might have been a fatal suspicion cast upon my professional capacity. I found the marks of clenched fingers upon the throat of the murdered man. I knew that I had beheld and experienced the incidents of his death-struggle precisely m they were impressed upon his own mind."

On page 82 of the August 15, 1879 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account of a near-death experience, one made long before that term was commonly used. First we hear of how dire was the condition of the patient:

"On the 1st of August, 1876, a premature labour induced the disease which culminated in what was supposed to be death . At one time, Dr. Thorne, supposing his patient would soon die, remained with her. .. The spasms of the neck and hands now relaxed, the head dropped forward upon the breast, the eyelids opened, the eyeballs resumed their normal position, the pupils were dilated, and the film gathered upon the eyes. The woman was dead. A current of electricity passed from the base of the brain to the lower portion of the back failed to revive her. She did, however, finally revive, only to pass through another change called death, finally reviving again."

The woman (Diana Powellson) gives this account:

"On the night of my first dying, the more I died the less pain I felt. I was so happy at going (oh ! sir, I suffered so much); felt no misery of any kind ; pain in the head all gone ; it seemed that I lost all consciousness but for a moment; when I came to my senses again I knew I was dead, but everything was very dark to me. I thought I was still blind. I became filled with terror, anticipating the worst. My husband (who died in 1866) soon, however, took hold of me. He told me I was on the wrong road. Others of my departed friends and my family did the same. The darkness suddenly vanished. I saw all my friends and millions of others, I saw hills and valleys, trees and flowers, rivers, seas,

lakes, and birds, and heard such music as I cannot describe. The people were not what I expected to see. They were ordinary men and women. Some were bright and beautiful, and others were lean and miserable-looking. I saw their homes. They lived in communities. All were much more beautiful than any we have, but some were not so beautiful as others. I saw many bright spirits, but was very much surprised that they had no wings. My friends led me from the dark place into the light. I did not come through this dark place any more, either in coming back or returning at any time. I saw many meetings or congregations, but did not learn what they were doing. I thought I was at home, but was told that I must return to my body again. My husband told me this. I cried and was very much angered at him, and still am for sending me back. I long to be in that beautiful home that they told me was mine."

The account is several paragraphs longer. We have here several elements that are common in near-death experiences reported after 1975, including going to some mysterious realm, encountering deceased relatives, being told that the person having the experience must return to the body again, a feeling that the mysterious realm was in some sense "home," and the person having the experience being upset about having to return back to an earthly body. The account here and the Ellen Ryan account given earlier in this post are only two of quite a few pre-1975 near-death experiences I have documented. By using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right, you can view all of them. Below is a 1972 story on near-death experiences and out-of-body experiences that preceded Raymond Moody's 1975 book *Life After Life*. Use the link here to read the original document.

London, February 12, 1972 No. 2072 On sale every Thursday Price 5p

They get a preview of after-life

IT ENDS THEIR FEAR OF DYING

A MAN who watched a priest give him the last rites, and then came back from the "dead," told his dramatic story in Sunday's "News of the World."

He featured in its investigation which revealed "the astonishing evidence of some of those who have come back from the dead". The newspaper added, "Did these people glimpse life after death?"

'ESP points to new level of reality' – Koestler

INSIDE

On page 224 of the November 7, 1879 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have this account which sounds impressive but which is not backed up by any specific details:

"Our correspondent informs us that his patient, on recovering from a prolonged state of coma, insisted most strenuously in the assurance that he had visited a scene and noted every detail of an event many miles away. He appeared to be so thoroughly convinced this was no mental delusion that careful inquiries were instituted, which led to a surprising corroboration of all the circumstantial minutiae. Utterly astonished at such an unexpected manifestation of mental faculties beyond the limits of any abnormal power of the ordinary senses, our correspondent was induced to repeat the experiment, selecting another patient unacquainted with the marvellous occurrence related. On returning to sensibility this patient also described events he had mentally witnessed, all which proved to be accurate in every particular."

On page 38 of the January 23, 1880 edition of *The Spiritualist* we hear of an apparition sighting:

"Mr. Shakespeare, one of the members, suddenly looked up, exclaiming, ' Good God, there is my father ! ' The whole Council then saw a figure of an unknown person glide through the chamber into another room which had no outlet, and disappear."

It was later determined that the man's father had died at a distant location. The report of the apparition gliding is a common feature of apparition reports.

On page 135 of the March 19, 1880 edition of *The Spiritualist* we have an account of apparitions at the Knock village of Ireland, interpreted as involving the Virgin Mary. On page 139 there is a long list of people claiming extraordinary cures from visiting the village, without being treated by doctors.

On page 73 of the August 13, 1880 edition of *The Spiritualist* we have this account:

"Mr. Berks T. Hutchinson, surgeon dentist, Cape Town, South Africa, writes:—'I have seen Mr. Eglinton float about in my seance room, just like a balloon; he was in a deep trance condition. There were ten others present who can vouch for what I say.' "

On page 4 of the July 31, 1880 edition of *The Banner of Light* we have this account by John Wetherbee of events at a July 23 seance:

"The room was light enough to consider it a light circle, and so many things were done and at once for the space of half-an-hour that no one could question but invisible spirits were the actors, even if the mediums had had their hands free, but being held by the two sitting with them made the matter doubly sure. To me the most interesting part of the manifestations was the writing by spirit hands, perfectly visible, while the paper was held by the friends in the room. During the manifestations, from the start, the sitters in front of the curtain were manipulated by spirit hands, and all saw them and knew they did not belong to the mediums; and the hands being disposed to write, some of the friends present put pencils into the grasp of these hands, sometimes in one place and sometimes in another, where they happened to be, and holding a sheet of paper the hands wrote with the pencil intelligent messages on the sheets of paper so presented ; all could see this done and know that it was accomplished by spirit hands, which belonged to no visible human body, yet every human personage in the room was visible. I have never seen anything more satisfactory than this writing was; they were spirit hands, and no mistake, materialised for the purpose."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, near-death experience, paranormal phenomena, pre-1975 near-death experience, shared death experience, spiritualism

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Naked Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 6)

Below are some posts I have published about people reporting they saw mysterious orbs with the naked eye:

Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 1 of 4)
Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 2 of 4)
Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 3 of 4)
Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 4 of 4)
Naked Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 5)

Let us look at some more cases of this type.

At the interesting thread here at www.citi-data.com, a user starts the thread with this comment

"My ex boyfriend passed away a little over four years ago. Four months after, ***I saw a gold/red colored orb in my bedroom.*** *Without going into details, I just want to ask how many of you have received 'signs' after your loved one passed away?"*

There are some very interesting answers in the nine pages of the thread. For example, one user says, "My sister's broken

grandfather clock started to chime when my grandmother passed away."

A user tells this interesting account:

"After my grandma died, she visited me in a dream, in her younger, healthier self, took me to this beautiful place that I remember describing as heaven (bright, pearly, just a lot of light and light feelings) and played games with me. She introduced me to her older brother who died when he was 7 (he still looked like a kid my age at the time) and we all played and she just made me feel...safe. She always had that ability. Anyways I woke up and my aunt who slept with me that night to comfort me told me that in my sleep I jumped up, raised my hands in the air and yelled, 'OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL PLACE THIS IS!!!!!!!!!' And then laid back down. So I told her the dream. I told her about the little boy and my family looked shocked because they couldn't understand how I knew her older brother."

On another page of the thread a user says this:

"I smelled peonies in the dead of winter in my bedroom when my dads mom passed. It was her favorite flower and she grew them."

On another page a user reports asking his father for a sign after death, specifically mentioning playing the piano. He says that a while later his own son reported the piano in the house playing by itself.

On another page a user says that soon after his mother died, **"I did see an orange orb in my windowless dark basement."** He says, "I then called my sister who explained that on her way home, she saw a ball of light in her SUV." He also reports "a light shining up from the floor to the ceiling" in a house he had lived in for 20 years without seeing such a thing.

When I was visiting the first of these pages, I got a spooky effect. The web page flickered like mad, very noticeably, on and on and on.

The long and very fascinating work *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* by former US congressman Robert Dale Owen (which can be read online for free here) is a classic of literature about the paranormal. The 1872 book The Debatable Land Between This World and the Next by the same author is a worthy successor volume of equal length. In that book on page 468 Owen reports on what we saw at a seance on October 26, 1860. To prevent any trickery, Owen was careful to make sure all the doors to the room were locked, and also made sure that

throughout the session all of the four persons present joined each other's hands in the center of the table where they sat. Under such conditions, Owen reported seeing this:

*"After a few minutes, there appeared a luminous body of **an irregularly circular form, about four inches in diameter, floating between us and the door** which was back of Mrs. Underhill. It was somewhat brighter than when it first appeared on the previous occasion ; that is, on the twenty-first of October."*

On the next page, Owen reports that at this session there appeared an illuminated mysterious figure, a kind of grayish cloud that eventually stated "God bless you." On the next page after that, Owen said he saw an outline of a head and face.

Owen recalls seeing in 1867 a luminous female apparition:

"It was a female figure, of medium height, veiled and draped, from head to foot, in white. The drapery did not resemble, in material, anything I have ever seen worn. It gave me, as on a previous occasion, the exact feeling of the Scriptural expression, 'shining raiment.' Its brilliancy was a good deal like that of new-fallen snow, in the sunshine ; recalling the text which declares the garments of Christ, during his transfiguration, to have been ' exceeding white as snow ; ' or, again, it was not unlike the finest and freshest Parian marble with a bright light on it, only more brilliant. It had not at all the glitter of spangles or any shining ornament ; the tone being as uniform as that of a newly-sculptured statue. It stood upright, in a graceful attitude, motionless."

On the next page Owen says, "Then it slowly receded, still facing us, to the center of the opposite wall... gradually diminishing in brightness ; and finally it vanished before my eyes." Owen later says, "Certain it is, that I beheld the gradual formation of the figure ; that I witnessed its movements ; that I received from its hand an actual flower ; that I saw the figure disappear."

On page 484 we have this account, mentioning Estelle, Mr. Livermore's late wife:

"*Mr. L. sealed the windows, sealed and locked the doors, and placed heavy furniture against them ; then searched the room thoroughly and extinguished the gas. Soon came the words : ' I am here in form.' Then a **globular light appeared**, with crackling sounds. **After a time it became a head**, veiled : then, but for a single instant only, Mr. L. recognized the features of Estelle. Then a figure was seen : all this being visible by*

phosphorescent or electrical lights in various parts of the room. During all this time Mr. L. held both of the medium's hands. Then the mode of producing raps was shown : ***an orange-shaped luminous ball****, with blunt point attached, bounding up and down on the table, and the sound, of each rap coinciding with the approach of the ball to the tabletop."*

Mr. Livermore reported that a few months later there occurred an equally astonishing appearance of his late wife Estelle:

"The form remained in sight fully half an hour and each movement was distinctly visible. Then came the message : ' Now see me rise. ' And immediately, in full brightness, the figure rose to the ceiling, remained there a few moments suspended ; then gently descending, disappeared. Afterward she showed herself between us and a mirror. The reflection of the figure in the glass was distinctly visible, the light being so bright as to show the veins in a marble slab beneath. Here a heavy shower of rain fell, and there was spelled out: ' The atmosphere has changed. I cannot remain in form : ' whereupon both light and figure finally disappeared."

Later Mr. Livermore reports this:

" At last ***a luminous globe which had remained stationary some six feet to my left floated in front****, and came within two feet of me. It was violently agitated, crackling sounds were heard, and a figure became visible by its light.* ***Then there was revealed the full head and face of Estelle, every feature and lineament in perfection, spiritualized in shadowy beauty, such as no imagination can conceive or pen describe****. In her hair, above the left temple, was a single white rose ; the hair being apparently arranged with great care. The entire head and face faded and then became visible again, at least twenty times ; the perfection of recognition, in each case, being in proportion to the brilliancy of the light."*

On the 68th page of the document here, showing page 182 on the printed page, we have an account from the March 25, 1922 edition of the publication *Light*. The account is pretty good from an evidence standpoint. It is an account of what was seen two months earlier. The author (Dorothy Monk) is named, and she tells us that there were eight witnesses of one of the reported anomalies (a spooky mist at a deathbed). We read this account by the author of seeing her mother's death.

"The sister who first saw it about this time also saw a ***large blue globe-like light resting on mother's head****, but none*

of the rest of us could see it. She explained that the inside appeared all moving and gradually it turned to deep purple and faded out. About seven o'clock that evening mother's lips parted and from that time ***we gradually saw a thick white mist collect above her head and spread across the head of the bed****. It came from the top of her head, but collected more thickly to the opposite side of the bed to which she was lying.* I**t** ***hung like a cloud of white steam, sometimes so thick we could scarcely see the bed rails,*** *but continually it was varying although it moved so slowly as to be scarcely perceptible. I and my five sisters were still with her all saw it distinctly, also my brother and one brother-in-law. The blue lights continued about the room, also tiny flashes of yellow, like sparks, appeared sometimes. All this time mother's lower jaw gradually fell a little. For some hours we saw little difference except that* ***a halo of pale yellow light rays came round her head****; there were about seven in number; they varied in length from twelve to twenty inches at different times. By midnight every-thing had cleared off, but she did not die until 7.17 on the morning of January 2nd."*

Charlton Templeman Speer claims to have witnessed a variety of paranormal phenomena at seances of William Stainton Moses, a 19th-century figure greatly admired for his scholarship and moral character. One thing he claims to have witnessed is something resembling teleportation. He states this:

"The passage of matter through matter was sometimes strikingly demonstrated by the bringing of various articles from other rooms, though the doors were closed and bolted. Photographs, picture-frames, books, and other objects were frequently so brought, both from rooms on the same floor and from those above. How they came through the closed doors I cannot say, except by some process of de-materialisation, but come they certainly did, apparently none the worse for the process, whatever it might have been."

Besides also describing numerous inexplicable scents and mysterious music, Speer tells us that orbs were seen rising up from the ground and apparently passing through a heavy table. We read this:

"These lights were of two different kinds— objective and subjective. The former usually resembled ***small illuminated globes****, which shone brightly and steadily, often moved rapidly about the room, and were visible to all the sitters. A curious fact in connection with these lights always struck me, viz., that looking on to the top of the table* ***one could see a light slowly ascending from the floor, and to all appearance passing out through the top of the table***

— the table itself apparently not affording any obstacle to one's view of the light. *It is a little difficult to explain my meaning exactly, but had the top of the table been composed of plain glass, the effect of the ascending light, as it appealed to one's organs of vision, would have been pretty much the same as it was, seen through the solid mahogany. Even then, to make the parallel complete, it would be necessary to have a hole in the glass top of the table, through which the light could emerge. The subjective lights were described as being large masses of luminous vapour floating round the room and assuming a variety of shapes. Dr. Speer and myself, being of entirely unmediumistic temperaments, were only able to see the objective lights, but Mr. Stainton Moses, Mrs. Speer, and other occasional sitters frequently saw and described those which were merely subjective. Another curious point in relation to the objective lights was that, however brightly they might shine, they never, unlike an ordinary lamp, threw any radiance around them, or illuminated the smallest portion of the surrounding darkness — when it was dark — in the slightest degree."*

A researcher named Simon Young has done a survey of people reporting sightings of fairies or anything looking like a fairy. He has produced a 353-long document you can read online at the link here. I am surprised that so many people have provided reports to his survey. Maybe I should revise my previous opinion that there only rarely occurs claims to have sighted something like a fairy. The accounts were gathered from responses to an online survey form here.

It would be too much work to summarize the more interesting accounts, so I will limit myself to accounts in the survey in which people claimed to have seen orbs. Some are below:

- Page 20: "They looked like brightly coloured orbs that changed size sometimes. They were always smaller than my hand and the colours varied e.g. blue, red, yellow, green etc."
- Page 22: "We [Mexican and Belgian nationals] saw golden yellow orbs in Tintagel."
- Page 54: "I saw bright green orbs hanging in the air in the bedroom."
- Page 125: "The orbs swirled about as I sat in the middle of the mattress with sheets wrapped around my lower half,... I found myself in the immediate company of hundreds of floating orbs that were doing wonderful impressions of soap bubbles."
- Page 126: "Moving again the orb passed by my ear and I heard a soft whirring sound that solicited goose

bumps to rise on top of my clammy skin. I smiled and giggled aloud with the realization that this was an intelligent, living being, and it was responding in kind to my thoughts."

- Page 128: "I was around eleven years old when a friend and myself saw an orb of light floating above the trees in the back woods where I grew up."
- Page 138: " 'I saw it flying in a circle like loop on way [sic] and then another through the kitchen window. It was really windy outside after a rainstorm and it moved against the wind. It had an organic movement to it....I want to say if I'm being very objective it was an orb."
- Page 155: "I've seen orbs and UFO type things."
- Page 165: "'Fell asleep, woke up to the sound of bells tinkling. Looked around my room to see a small blue orb floating around for one to two minutes then it faded out."
- Page 175: "It was orb-shaped and looked to be about like one foot in circumference, and its color was a really bright pink....It was like a bright pink orb almost as big as a basketball."
- Page 182 "I have however, now in the last three to five years, begun seeing and experiencing light orbs, light beings, and even capturing them on the security cameras inside my home."
- Page 187: "I also have seen little light orbs floating around at sunset/nighttime."
- Page 193: "I saw a winged creature in a golden orb playing with my aunt's cat."
- Page 199: "In my peripheral vision, I saw this beautiful, adorable, pink orb. It looked like it was fluttering in place, as if it had large butterfly wings. I looked directly at it, and it disappeared. I quickly looked away and it popped back out of nowhere still with fluttering pink wings. I did not see any face or body; it did not let me look directly at it."
- Page 211: "I also saw light orbs twinkling close to the wall and on the ceiling."
- Page 215: "We were on our front lawn at night, and we saw a small orb of orange light moving around in the forest, leaving a trail. It then hovered in one spot, maybe two hundred feet from us, for hours..... Then, night four, I saw several of these orbs, now bluish white, appear from a tree, then they flew, lit up, about one-hundred-and-fifty feet, and stopped

directly in front of my house... A closer one appeared to be about three- to four-inches tall, fluttering goldish wings within a bluish orb."

- Page 217: " I walked across the backyard and just had that feeling that something was there and when I turned around, just a few inches above the ground was an orb. It was golden and full of light but inside it you could see swirls of colors such as blues, pinks and purples."
- Page 226: "They were blue orbs. And then they disappeared."
- Page 252: "The children were surrounded by thousands upon thousands of little lights. My youngest daughter had an orb with a visible baby's face at her feet."
- Page 270: "At the end of my bed and to the right there was an orb, but almost like a sparkle. I would say it was white and yellow."
- Page 276: "A skyblue light, orb-like but with indistinct, fading boundaries flew slowly from behind me into my field of vision, about a foot or two from my face."
- Page 298: "I looked at my closet door and I saw many colorful orbs moving over its surface. There were at least five of them, each one of a different color. I remember the colors green, yellow and pink (and maybe blue and white). "
- Page 321: "In 2005, an orb of light about six inches in diameter floating about six inches above the floor in our hallway one afternoon. It floated beside me and disappeared before passing near my husband's shin. We were stunned and I wish I said or greeted this white light ball which seemed to have brighter light planes within it. My husband saw it also, but he only saw it glowing and didn't notice the planes of brighter or denser light moving within."
- Page 328: " Coming by her side we witnessed the formation of orb-shaped lights of warm colours (red, yellow and green) hovering above my street, quite above the highest building in my neighbourhood but below the clouds. Maybe a hundred metres or lower. It's hard to tell how big they were from that distance, but probably more than one metre in orb radius...There were six orbs that slowly changed colours, flying in the sky in a manner different from drones, planes or birds. At they were gliding slowly forming a ring, then suddenly they broke the pattern

into three pairs circling each other playfully, something like chasing one another....The orbs felt more like living entities than devices or machines, their way of moving and changing colour felt playful and deliberate, like dancing or playing a game."

In a Buddhist work quoted by two UFO researchers, we have the following account of a mysterious orb:

"At midnight one of Japan's greatest saints, Nichiren Shonin (1222-1282), was being escorted to the beach to be executed. Just before the fatal moment, a brilliant sphere as large as the moon flew over, illuminating the landscape. The authorities were so frightened by the apparition that they changed their minds about putting Shonin to death. Instead, they exiled him to Sado Island, though this did not prevent his teachings from spreading. A branch of his teachings, the Sokka-Gakkei, has millions of adherents throughout the world today."

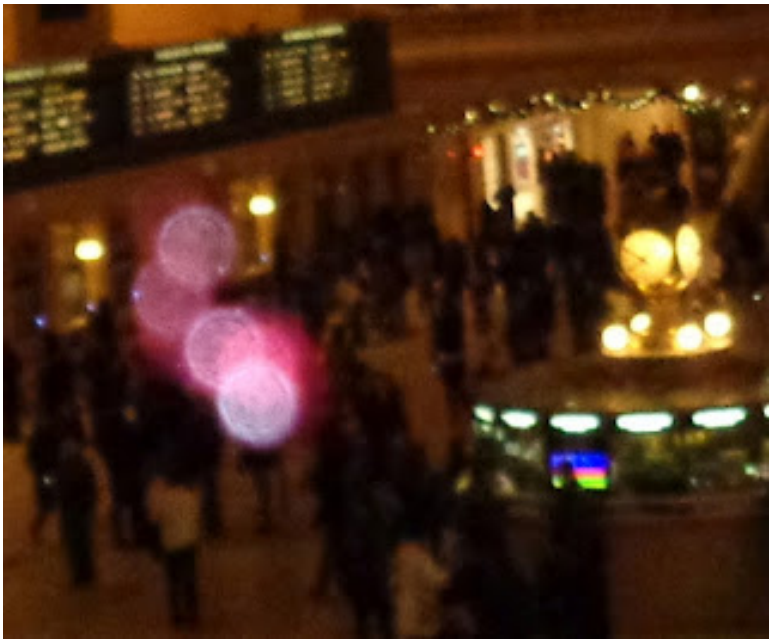
On page 3 of the March 12, 1875 edition of a newspaper, we have an account by Prince Emile De Sayn-Wittgenstein, who seems to be the same person described on the autobiographical page here. Emile says, "I had, about a year and a half ago, tried in vain to convert a young lady to the belief that, under special conditions, her soul might quit her body and act independently of it." Eventually the woman give Emile one of her gloves, which Emile thought might help facilitate some experiment in which the two of them would test an ability to make a psychic contact with each other even though they were far separated. Emile says that for weeks he intensely concentrated while holding the glove, thinking of the woman far away. He reports this:

"I afterwards ascertained that she had often dreamt of me very clearly, and that she even remembered having once seen me writing at my table. Her description of my dress and of the room I occupied answered exactly to the reality. She also confirmed several facts and episodes of her private life, the particulars of which I had obtained in the way described."

Strangely, Emile reports that during what seemed like psychic contact between the two people far separated, he would see what could be described as a mysterious orb: "Every time her spirit answered my call, I felt a pleasant sort of shiver running down my back, while a sort of dim circular light, about as big as a plate, and of a pale, yellowish hue, appeared moving, to and fro near the ceiling."

A yellow mysterious orb? I've photographed 182 of those, as you can see by using the link here, and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right. Below is one of 100 photos I have

taken of mysterious orbs that seemed to be traveling so fast they exhibited a kind of "string of pearls" effect in which we seem to see multiple position states of a single object. The photo is from my 2015 post here.



A similar photo is this photo is from my 2017 post here.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

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Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Taboo Truth: The Reality of Hypnotic Clairvoyance and Hypnotic Telepathy

"*The distinguished Parisian Professor of Medicine, Rostan, gave at the time his corroborative testimony to the existence of this power in the article ' Magnetisme,' in the ' Dictionnaire de Medecine,' wherein he remarked : '**There are few facts better demonstrated than clairvoyance'** ....Innumerable instances are recorded of the possession of the faculty of clairvoyance by persons in the normal state, in sleep [hypnotism], and in some abnormal conditions of the system,* " -- Edwin Lee, MD, "Animal Magnetism and Magnetic Lucid Somnambulism" page 103 and page 133.

It was documented by many nineteenth century writers and authorities that under hypnosis a person could show paranormal powers of clairvoyance or telepathy. In the long posts here and here and here I discuss some of the abundant observational evidence for such a thing. I may note that the reality of clairvoyance under hypnosis was firmly declared by a high-prestige French academic committee, a six-year investigation of the Royal Academy of Medicine that issued its report in 1831.

During the nineteenth century hynotized people were often asked to engage in a kind of thought sharing or "mind meld" with another person, a state that was called being *en rapport* with that person. A nineteenth century work on hypnotism (written by Professor William Gregory) gives this summary, using the word "sleeper" for a hypnotized person:

"Thought reading presents itself in every possible variety of form. The sleeper, being placed en rapport *with any person, can often describe, with the greatest accuracy, the subject that*

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occupies the thoughts of that person. It may be an absent friend, or his own house, or that of another, or his drawing-room, bed-room, study, &c. &c. All these things the sleeper perceives, as they pass through the mind of the experimenter, and describes with great minuteness and accuracy, so as to excite our astonishment. Or he goes further ; he not only perceives the present, but the past thoughts of the person en rapport *with him ; he shares his memory. Thus he will mention facts, no longer so existing, but remembered by the experimenter. Nay, he goes still further even than this ; for he perceives things once known to, and now forgotten by, the experimenter, who very often contradicts the sleeper, and persists in maintaining his own opinion, until, on further enquiry, he not only finds him to be right, but himself is enabled to recall the fact, which had, as we say, escaped his memory."*

Professor Gregory here makes a very remarkable claim: that under hypnosis a subject may display a mental power beyond mere telepathy: a power not just of mind-reading or thought-reading, but also of memory-reading. The same nineteenth century work (*Letters to a Candid Inquirer, on Animal Magnetism)* by Gregory gives some very specific numerical details relating to clairvoyance in hypnotic trances (referred to below as "mesmeric sleep"):

"Major Buckley has thus produced conscious clairvoyance in 89 persons, of whom 44 have been able to read mottoes contained in nut-shells, purchased by other parties for the experiment. The longest motto thus read, contained 98 words. Many subjects will read motto after motto without one mistake. In this way, the mottoes contained in 4860 nut-shells have been read, some of them, indeed, by persons in the mesmeric sleep, but most of them by persons in the conscious state, many of whom have never been put to sleep. In boxes, upwards of 86,000 words have been read; 'in one paper, 371 words. Including those who have read words contained in boxes when in the sleep, 148 persons have thus read. It is to be observed that, in a few cases, the words may have been read by thought-reading, as the persons who put them in the boxes were present; but in most cases, no one who knew the words has been present, and they must therefore have been read by direct clairvoyance. Every precaution has been taken. The nuts, inclosing mottoes, for example, have been purchased of 40 different confectioners, and have been sealed up until read. It may be added, that of the 44 persons who have read mottoes in nuts by waking or conscious clairvoyance, 42 belong to the higher class of society; and the experiments have been made in the presence of many other persons. These experiments appear to me admirably contrived,

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and I can per- ceive no reason whatever to doubt the entire accuracy of the facts."

Later in the same work we read many detailed descriptions of clairvoyance under hypnosis, one of which is the account below (which uses the term "magnetic sleep" to refer to a hypnotic trance):

"E., in the magnetic sleep, as I saw more than once, could see perfectly what passed behind her, her eyes being closed ; or any thing placed in such a position, that, had her eyes been open, she could not have seen it ; she could also see very often all that passed outside of the door, and when I was there, told us how many of the servants of the hotel were listening at the door, in hopes of
hearing wonders ; she would also often tell what was doing in the room above or below her. In short, she frequently exhibited direct clairvoyance in every form, not only in those just mentioned, but also in that of seeing prints or pictures shut up in boxes. Besides seeing various instances of direct clairvoyance, I was able to satisfy myself that Dr. Haddock's experiments were made with the greatest care and judgment ; that he was particularly well acquainted with the various causes of error and confusion, very careful to avoid these, and that in short his accounts of such experiments as I had not seen were entirely trustworthy."

On page 334 in the same work by Professor Gregory, we read this account of clairvoyance under hypnotism:

"We requested her to visit the house of Mrs. P., one of the ladies present. This house was in Greenock, distant from my cottage about a mile and a quarter. She saw her servant in the kitchen, but said that another woman was with her. On being pressed to look earnestly at the woman, she said it was C_____ M_____. This, Mrs. P. declared to be true. We then asked her to see if any person was in Mrs. P.'s parlor, when she said that Miss Laing was there, a young lady from Edinburgh, who was boarding with Mrs. P. at the time ; that she was sitting on the sofa ; that she was crying, and that a letter was in her hand. On the party breaking up, I walked into Greenock with the ladies and gentlemen, in order to see if she was right about Miss L. It was true. Miss L. had received a letter by that evening's post from her father in Edinburgh, stating that her mother was not expected to live, and requesting her to come home by the first train in the morning."

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

Notable Posts

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- A Very Strong Effect of Repeating Patterns in Mysterious Striped Orbs
- They Had Flourishing Minds But Broken Brains
- Paradoxes That Puncture Professorial Pretensions
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- The Enigma of Veridical Near-Death Experiences
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- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 Cases
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
- Biological Orthodoxy Flunks the Software Test
- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

Many specific case examples of such a thing can be found in the three posts mentioned above (the posts here and here and here).

Although living mind researchers have usually displayed an appalling failure to research the topic of clairvoyance under hypnosis that was so well-documented in the nineteenth century, we occasionally get evidence of it even in recent years. A 2020 paper found that hypnosis increased success in remote viewing efforts, remote viewing being essentially a synonym for clairvoyance. Using RV for a non-hypotic "remote viewing" attempts, and OB-RV for a hypnotically aided "remote viewing" attempts, in which subjects were encouraged to mentally travel out of their bodies, the paper states the following:

"The purpose of this study was to compare the ability to identify and describe physical targets, from a distance, in the RV and OB-RV states of consciousness.The results clearly demonstrate that in both conditions, the amount of correct information is clearly greater than wrong information, with a difference of around 20%. The only difference in performance between the two is in the number of correct information, which is slightly greater in the OB-RV condition."

The author Joseph Haddock reported that after hypnotizing a subject, the subject would respond to any pain inflicted on Joseph, just as if the hypnotized person had felt the pain: "I have got individuals to tread on my toes, pull my hair, or pinch different parts of the body ; and I invariably found that, with this subject, not many seconds would elapse before she would complain of exactly similar treatment, and refer the pain to the exact corresponding part; and sometimes I have experienced considerable difficulty in dispelling the illusion."

An effect totally inexplicable under materialist assumptions is what is called "community of sensations" under hypnosis. It has been very frequently reported that a hypnotized person may instantly feel sensations felt by the person who hypnotized him. A set of experiments on this effect is reported in the "First Report of the Committee on Mesmerism" pages 225-229 of Volume 1 of the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research (April, 1883), a committee including the illustrious names of Frederic Myers, Edmund Gurney, Frank Podmore, George Wyld M.D. and the eventually knighted physicist W.F. Barrett. We read this on page 226: "Thus out of a total of 24 experiments in transference of pains, the exact spot was correctly indicated by the subject no less than 20 times." These were experiments in which the hypnotized subject was asked

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- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

whether he felt anything, after the hypnotizer had been given some type of pain or sensation while in another room where the hypnotized person could not see him. Similar results were obtained by Dr. Edmund Gurney and reported in his paper "An Account of Some Experiments in Mesmerism," published on page 201 of Volume II of the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research (June 1884). As reported on page 205, a hypnotized subject identified with high accuracy many tactile and taste sensations occurring in a hypnotizer sitting behind him.

On pages 22-23 of one of his books, Professor William Gregory describes various forms of "community of sensation" between hypnotized subjects and hypnotists, or those who they have been put *en rapport* with:

"There is Community of Taste. If the operator [i.e. hypnotist], or any person, en rapport *with the subject, takes any kind of food or drink into his mouth, the sleeper, in many cases, instantly begins going through the pantomime of eating or drinking ; and, if asked, he declares he is eating bread, or an orange, or sweetmeats, or drinking water, wine, milk, beer, syrup, or lemonade, or infusion of wormwood, or brandy, or whisky, according as the operator takes each of them, or any other substance. When the thing taken is bitter or disagreeable, the countenance of the sleeper at once indicates this, while his eyes, as usual, are closed, and the mesmerist or friend may stand behind him, so that he cannot see what is taken....The same thing occurs with regard to Smell. If the person* ***en rapport*** *with the sleeper, smell a rose, the latter at once begins to inhale the delightful perfume. If he smell assafoetida, the sleeper expresses disgust ; and if he place strong hartshorn under his own nostrils, the sleeper starts back, complaining of its pungency....There is Community of Touch. Whatever touches the person* en rapport *, is felt by the sleeper, in precisely the same part. If the former shake hands with any one, the latter instantly grasps a visionary hand. If a pin be driven into the back of the mesmerist's hand, the sleeper hastily withdraws his hand, rubs the part, and complains loudly of the injury. This may be tried in all forms with perfect success in very many subjects."*

In a discussion of twentieth century research we read this:

"Summarizing the results of recent ESP research using hypnosis, Honorton points out that, out of 42 series of trials, slightly over half have provided positive results, as against a chance expectation of five per cent. 'I believe the conclusion is

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

Other Blogs by This Author

- Head Truth
- Orb Pro

now inescapable that hypnotic induction procedure enhance psi receptivity.' "

Beginning on page 223 of the 1841 book *Facts in mesmerism or animal magnetism : with reasons for a dispassionate inquiry into it* by Chauncy-Hare Townshend, we have many pages of the author describing clairvoyance in a hypnotized subject Anna M. We hear report after report of Anna identifying things with closed eyes, seemingly as if she had vision rising from her forehead rather than her eyes. On page 231 the same author states this about another subject he studied under hypnosis: "His eyes being always firmly shut, (as far as the strictest observation could determine,) he was able to read any number of words in the minutest type with perfect ease, and to discern small or large objects, near or distant, with the same felicity of vision which is possessed by a waking person." We read this:

"This power of perception, analogous to sight, seemed to reside principally in his forehead. Whatever objects he took up to examine he immediately carried there."

Later in the same book we have an account of the most varied and careful tests consistently showing clairvoyance in a hypnotized subject (subject E. A.), tests involving conditions so stringent they seem to rule out any possibility of trickery:

"1st. I laid the patient on a sofa, in bright daylight, with his face turned towards the window, and made him lean his head back until I could see completely under his eyes. When he was so placed, I could have detected the slightest gleam of the eye through the smallest opening of the lids. I have then given him a book, from which he has read with ease, (holding it nearly parallel to his forehead,) while all the time I fixed my eyes earnestly on his, and yet could perceive not the slightest tendency in them to unclose.

2dly. I laid the palms of my hands, the fingers pointing upwards, on the eyes of various persons, in such a manner as that the projecting parts of each hand should exactly fit into the concavities about the eyes. These persons assured me that, with their eyes so covered, they could see nothing whatever. I have given them cards or books in their hands, but by no efforts on their parts could they distinguish these objects. I have repeated the same experiment

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Featured Post

Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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Labels

- 'Oumuamua (1)
- 3D printing (1)
- abiogenesis (1)
- abundance (1)
- acupuncture (1)
- after death communication (2)
- age of mankind (1)
- age of universe (3)
- aging (2)
- AI (1)
- alien abductions (2)
- alien attack (1)
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

again and again upon E. A., in a state of [hypnotized] sleepwalking, and never found that the palms of my hands in any way impeded his vision. He could see cards, or read in books, under the above circumstances, with perfect ease. I never felt any motion beneath my hand, as if the patient were trying to open his eyes ; nor did he evince the slightest inclination to draw his head back from the pressure of my hands.

3dly. Standing behind the patient, I have laid my closed fingers over his eyes horizontally, or I have forcibly pressed down his lids with one finger of each hand. This, which, when tried on others, effectually impeded their sight, made no alteration in the visual perceptions of the [hypnotized] sleepwalker.

4thly. Having filled a couple of china eye-glasses with wadding, I, or some other person, held them firmly to the patient's closed eyes when in sleepwalking. This also made no difference in his visual perceptions....

5thly. I have tried various methods of bandaging the patient's eyes. I have tied a broad and thick silk handkerchief over them, and then I have held down with my fingers, or the palms of my hands, the whole of the bottom part of the bandage. This method seems to me as perfect as any. It did not at all impede the sleepwalker's vision. In addition to this, (the same result always ensuing,) I have laid strips of wadding over the eyes before applying the handkerchief, and I have firmly secured every possible interstice between it and the cheek with cotton. In the presence of Dr. Foissac, strips of diachylum were added to all the above apparatus, in order to fasten down the edges of the handkerchief to the cheek ; but the sleepwalker saw as well as ever. On several occasions I bandaged his eyes, adding the cotton and the wadding before beginning to mesmerise [hypnotize] him, when he has assured me that he could not distinguish day from night. Then, having passed into sleepwalking, he has immediately given proofs of perfect vision — quite as perfect, indeed, as that enjoyed by persons whose eyes are open and unbound.

6thly. I threw over the patient's head two thick and large towels, which covered him in front down

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
- anthropic principle (22)
- antimatter (3)
- apocalypse (5)
- apparition (76)
- apparition acting like a death notification (22)
- apparition of the living (6)
- apparition seen by multiple witnesses (16)
- apports (5)
- aquatic mega-patternization (1)
- archaeology (1)
- argument against brain storage of all memories (20)
- argument for soul (17)
- argument from evil (3)
- Artemis (1)
- artificial intelligence (7)
- artificial planets (1)
- artificial worlds (1)
- asteroid mining (1)
- asteroids (1)
- astral projection (1)
- astrobiology (2)
- astroengineering (3)
- astronomy (14)
- atheism (3)
- augmented reality (2)
- aura (1)
- austerity (1)
- Australian mystery lights (1)
- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

to the hips. Through these he has read, holding the book at an angle with his forehead, and has distinguished cards with perfect accuracy. This kind of experiment was occasionally varied. Sometimes the sleepwalker has been bandaged, and, in addition to this, a towel has been thrown over his head ; but the result was equally satisfactory."

Can we imagine a more stringent series of tests? And the subject kept demonstrating clairvoyance, despite each and every thing impeding normal vision. You will never hear about such tests in the writing of materialists or skeptics. They will only tell you about some poorly designed test in which someone might have peeked by looking down at his chest through a blindfold that was not very tight. They will not tell you about the innumerable successful tests of clairvoyance in which there was no possibility of someone cheating.

On page 84 to 88 of the September 22, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have a long article by scientist William Barrett. Barrett describes witnessing people put under hypnosis who seemed to have powers of telepathy and clairvoyance that blossomed in such a state. First on page 86 we read this about telepathy between the hypnotized and the hypnotist (called the operator):

"I noticed that if the operator tasted, smelt, or touched anything, or experienced any sudden sensation of warmth or cold, a corresponding effect was instantly produced on the subject, though nothing was said, nor could the subject have seen what had taken place in the operator. To be assured of this, I bandaged the girl's eyes with great care, and the operator having gone behind the girl to the other end of the room, I watched him and the girl, and repeatedly assured myself of this fact. If he placed his hand over the lighted lamp, the girl instantly withdrew hers, as if in pain; if he tasted salt or sugar, corresponding expressions of dislike and approval were indicated by the girl. If, however, any one else in the room other than the operator tried the experiment, I could perceive no indications on the part of the subject. Certainly, so far as my observations extended, there did seem to be a vast difference between the influence exerted on the subject by the operator, and that which would be exerted by anyone else."

Barrett then tells us on page 86 about witnessing clairvoyance or telepathy in a hypnotized subject:

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

"Having mesmerised [hypnotized] the girl myself, I took a card at random from a pack that was in a drawer in another room. Glancing at the card to see what it was, I placed it within a book, and in this state brought it to the girl. Giving her the closed book, I asked her to tell me what I had put within its leaves. She held the book close to the side of her head (a peculiar position always resorted to for information), and said 'I see something inside with red spots on it.' 'Count the spots,' I told her; she did so, and said there were five red spots. The card was the five of diamonds. With another card, chosen in a similar way, the same result occurred; and when an Irish bank note was substituted she said, ' Oh now I see a number of heads; so many I can't count them.' She sometimes failed to guess correctly, asserting the things were dim, and invariably I found she could give me no information of what was within the book, unless I had previously known what it was myself. More remarkable still, I asked her to go in imagination to Regent-street, in London, and tell me what shops she saw. The girl had never been out of her remote Irish village, but she correctly described to me Mr. Ladd's shop, of which I happened to be thinking, and mentioned the large clock that overhangs the entrance to Beak-street. In many other ways I convinced myself that the existence of a distinct idea in my own mind gave rise to an image of the idea in the subject's mind ; not always a clear image, but one that could not fail to be recognised as a more or less distorted reflection of my own thought. The important point is that every care was taken to prevent any unconscious muscular action of the face, or otherwise giving any indication to the subject."

Barrett quotes another experimenter (W. E. Wilson) who said this:

"You are correct, as I remember several experiments of the same kind. I think we proved beyond all doubt that the subject is able to read the thoughts of the mesmeriser [hypnotist]. Also that they are able to see through things which are optically to us opaque, provided that they could touch them or hold them in their hand....Another instance I remember was with a country boy. He was mesmerised [hypnotized] in a room which we made perfectly dark. Cards were given to him at random from a pack. He told fourteen correctly without a mistake, and I have no doubt would have gone through the pack if we liked. Of coarse you know that they don't try to use the eyes to see with. They always, without exception, put whatever is put in their hand to the side of their head, a little behind the ear, and about six inches from them."

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

On March 27, 1887 the New York Sun published this report by one of its correspondents who described a boy who dramatically demonstrated clairvoyance under hypnosis:

"The subject on this night was a boy of fourteen named Wally Andrus. He is what is termed a susceptible subject. Mr. Alderman can draw him across the street by a wave of the hand. He can look at the boy and say to himself, ' I want you to come to my house tomorrow night,' and the boy will come without any further understanding. The lad was placed in an easy chair, a few passes of the hand put him under the influence, and here is the colloquy and the result :

Mr. A. — 'Wally, I want you to go down to the hotel and go up one flight of stairs.'

Wally.— 'Yes, sir, I'm there.'

' Now turn to your left and go to the second door, on the left hand side. Is there a number on the door? '

'No, sir, there is a letter L. '

'Very well, go inside and tell me what you see.'

The mesmerized boy entered the room and described and accurately located every article of furniture, described every picture, told the time by the clock, and then gave the colors of the gas globes. Neither Mr. Alderman nor the boy had ever entered the hotel. Some of the articles described had been placed in the room only an hour before. He was sent into three different rooms in the same hotel and did not make one mistake. The hotel is a mile from the residence where the exhibition was given. He was brought out of the hotel and sent to a residence a mile further away, and the colloquy went on.

'Are you there?'

'Yes.'

'What kind of a house is it ? '

'A double brick.'

'Are the steps wood or stone? '

' Neither; they are iron.'

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

' Now go inside. Is there a carpet on the floor? '

'No; the floor is of tile.'

'Where is the parlor? '

'To the right.'

' Go in and tell me what you see? '

'There's a square piano, a sofa, chairs, etc.' (He described everything, even to photographs, and told the time by the parlor clock.)

' Now go upstairs. Anyone there? '

'Yes; an Irish woman.'

'Ask her name? '

'She won't give it. She wants to know what I am doing here.'

' But ask her name? '

'She says it's Mollie.'

Such, in truth, was and is the name of the Irish servant. He afterward located a girl reading at a table, and gave the name of the book in her hand, and the next' day we verified his statements."

It is important to understand the history of hypnosis. Although there is reason to suspect that it existed before the time of Mesmer, the modern practice of hypnosis began with the work of the physician Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815). Mesmer introduced a psychological medical practice he called animal magnetism. He thought that it involved some mysterious fluid that could be manipulated using magnets or rods. Mesmer seemed to have produced mysterious new results of great importance, although he and his disciples seemed to have been too dogmatic in theorizing how the results were produced. The disciples of Mesmer made claims that his techniques could produce various mysterious and wonderful effects. A disciple of Mesmer (Amand-Marie-Jacques de Chastenet, the Marquis de Puységur) developed a technique called "artificial somnambulism" that was equivalent to hypnosis.

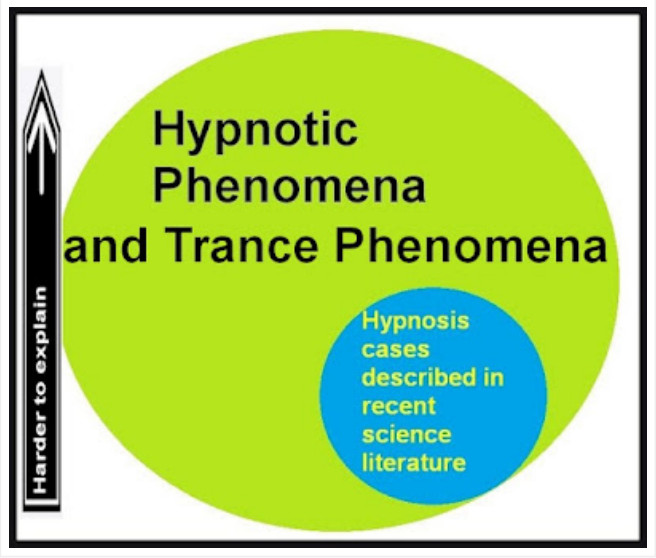
- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

For the first half of the nineteenth century, hypnotism was very widely practiced and studied, but was not yet recognized by most mainstream authorities. During this time it was very widely reported in print that clairvoyance could be produced under hypnosis. Before 1850 hypnotism was called various things other than hypnosis, such as "Mesmerism," "animal magnetism" or "artificial somnambulism."

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, James Braid coined the term "hypnosis." Braid seemed to have had the goal of taking a fraction of the phenomena reported under the names of "Mesmerism," "animal magnetism" or "artificial somnambulism" (a less remarkable and more easily explicable fraction) and positioning that as something that could be understood within the assumptions of mainstream science. Under the new name of "hypnosis," a fraction of the observational phenomena described before as "Mesmerism," "animal magnetism" or "artificial somnambulism" was then recognized by mainstream science professors as an observational fact. But this was all a case of severe "reality filtering," in which half of the reported phenomena were still denied. A rough analogy might be if someone who did not want to believe in very bad weather reluctantly confessed the reality of hurricanes, while still refusing to believe in the reality of tornadoes, denying the truth of all the observational reports of tornadoes.

The diagram below illustrates the situation. Psychology textbooks and psychology professors will typically confess the reality of hypnosis, and describe various hypnotic phenomena (represented by the blue circle). But such textbooks and professors will discuss only the less impressive phenomena observed under hypnosis. No mention will be made of the more impressive phenomena, even though the written evidence for such phenomena is very abundant.

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)



There are some ways to become familiar with the more spectacular phenomena that have been reported in hypnotic subjects, phenomena that today's professors typically avoid discussing. One way is to read my long post "Prevailing Brain Dogmas Cannot Explain Hypnotic Phenomena," which can be read here. Another way is to study the works I refer to above, and also the work "Animal Magnetism, or Mesmerism and Its Phenomena" by Professor William Gregory, which can be read online here. Being careful to sidestep the dubious theorizing that sometimes occurs in it, the book can be read for its wealth of fascinating observational reports. For example, on page 13 Gregory states this: "If the mesmerist [i.e. hypnotist] speaks German or Italian, languages perhaps quite unknown to the subject, and with the greatest rapidity, the sleeper will speak after him so exactly, that it is often impossible, when his ear is acute in catching the minute shades of the sound, to perceive the slightest difference." Such a feat would seem to be possible only by some vast increase in short-term memory. An ordinary person could not repeat a twenty-word sentence spoken in a language he did not know.

On page 18 Gregory states this, discussing a kind of "telepathic knockout":

"After the operator [i.e. hypnotist] has succeeded in producing the sleep [i.e. hypnosis] easily and in a short time, he can, in many cases, produce it by the silent exertion of the will, without any passes, or other process of any kind. This I have myself done, and in one case, where the subject was deeply engaged in conversation without any idea that I intended any thing of the kind, as I had taken, up to that moment, an active share in the conversation, I put him into a sound mesmeric sleep in 25 seconds (his eyes having been directed to other persons

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

present), by the silent power of the will. I sat about four or five feet from him, to one side."

This claim of a kind of "telepathic knockout" was also made by Emilie Boirac (as I discuss in my post here). On page 104 of the book "Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain" by Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder, we read a chapter discussing many examples of so-called "telepathic knockouts." During such events it would appear that a person was put into a state of deep sleep or unconsciousness solely because of the mental suggestion of some other person. We read, "The ability to put people to sleep and wake them up telepathically from a distance of a few yards to over a thousand miles became the most thoroughly tested and perfected contribution of the Soviets to international parapsychology." After reading of countless successful experiments of such an effect, we read of such a test being successful at a distance of a thousand miles. At a scheduled time, one scientist mentally commanded a subject a thousand miles away to fall asleep. We are told, "A thousand miles away Ivanova lost consciousness on schedule as she talked to Dr. Doubrovsky."

On page 178 of the work here, Professor Gregory begins to describe very many specific cases of clairvoyance under hypnosis. For example, we read this test:

"Case 29. — 1. Before I had seen E., I sent to Dr. Haddock the writing of a lady, without any details, requesting merely to know what E. should say of it. I did not even say it was a lady's writing, and, indeed, as the hand is a strong hold one, Dr. H. supposed it was that of a man. E. took it in her hand, she being in the sleep, and soon said 'I see a lady. She is rather below middle height, dark-complexioned, pale, and looks ill.' She then proceeded to describe the house, the drawing-room in which the lady was, her dress, and the furniture, ***all with perfect accuracy*** *as far as she went. She said the lady was sitting at a long table close to the wall, something like a sideboard, writing a letter; that on this table were several beautiful glasses, such as she had never seen. (In fact, this lady writes at a long sofa-table at the wall, on which then stood several Bohemian glasses.) She further detailed,* ***with strict accuracy,*** *all the symptoms of the lady's illness, mentioning several things, known to the lady alone. She also described the treatment which had been followed, and said, among other things, that the lady had gone over the water, to a place where she drank ' morning waters' for her health ; that the waters had a strange taste, but had done her good. (The lady had been at a mineral water in Germany, and had derived benefit from it. The water was always taken in*

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

the morning.) I need not enter into all the details ; it is enough to state, that not only Dr. H. did not know the lady, nor even her name, but that he had had no means of knowing any one of the details specified."

This is only a small part of a very long narrative involving this hypnotized subject E., one in which we hear many similar accounts of her clairvoyant prowess. Here is an excerpt from another page, in which Professor Gregory describes giving E. some paper with writing from his son:

"She then put it on her head, and said that it was written by a little boy, whom she described very accurately, dwelling particularly on the peculiarities of his disposition, his old-fashioned ways, as she called them, his love of reading, and various other points all more or less characteristic. His dress astonished her very much, and she described it most minutely in every part. It was the Highland dress, and she gave the colours and pattern of the tartan, as well as every other detail of the boy's dress and accoutrement. It appeared that she had never seen the Highland dress worn, and she thought it must be very cold. The boy was my own son, then in Edinburgh, and neither E. nor Dr. H. knew that I had a son, or that he wore the Highland dress."

On the next page Professor Gregory tells us this: "After I returned to Edinburgh, I had very frequent communication with Dr. H., and tried many experiments with this remarkable subject, sending specimens of writing, locks of hair, and other objects, the origin of which was perfectly unknown to Dr. H., and in every case, without exception, E. saw and described with accuracy the persons concerned." This occurred before the invention of the telephone and the internet, and cannot be accounted for without admitting the reality of clairvoyance or telepathy, except by appealing to some fantastically improbable set of coincidences. In Case 31 discussed here, E. describes the exact details of a watch stolen very far away, merely referred to as a gold watch, and provides exact details (unknown to her) about the watch's owner and the place where it was stolen, and also provides information that leads to the recovery of the watch.

On another page Professor Gregory states this:

"I have mentioned before, in this work, a remarkable case, in which this same clairvoyante, with the aid of handwriting, traced the progress of a gentleman, Mr. W. Willey, then in California, as well as of another person who accompanied Mr.

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

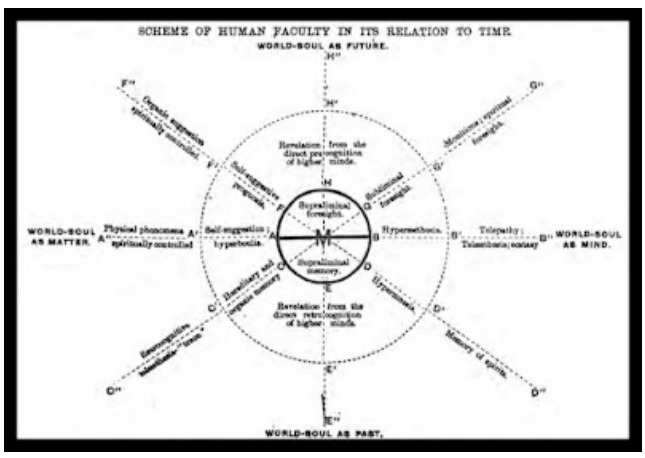
W., and whose writing was also shown to her. In this case, which was published in the newspapers, E. gave a multitude of details in regard to the persons, their voyage, their occupations, and various occurrences, the whole of which details were, in so far as concerned the period subsequent to their embarking at Liverpool, entirely unknown to their families, but were afterwards fully confirmed in every point by Mr. W. on his return."

On page 246 of the May 21, 1880 edition of *The Spiritualist*, Percy Wyndham tells of visiting a clairvoyant, unannounced. He asks the person to mentally travel to his son's school. We read this about what happened after Percy asked for details of a particular room:

"He described it as a very long room, wainscoted with oak ; I then said, ' Do you see anything else in it ?" He replied, ' I see a row of busts round the room, and the tops of the heads are covered with dust.' This was the feature which I wished to see whether he would notice or not, the peculiarity of the upper school at Eton being the row of busts of distinguished men who have been educated there placed round the room."

On pages 61 to 64 of the document here, we have an account of very powerful clairvoyance in a 15-year-old boy, when he was hypnotized.

Below is a 19th century diagram trying to express the complexity of the human mind and its relation to a hypothesized "world mind."


SCHEME OF HUMAN FACULTY IN ITS RELATION TO TIME.
WORLD-SOUL AS FUTURE.
WORLD-SOUL AS MATTER.
WORLD-SOUL AS MIND.
WORLD-SOUL AS PAST.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 8:12 AM No comments:

Labels: clairvoyance, ESP, hypnotic trance, paranormal phenomena, telepathy

Monday, April 1, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 15: The Year 1878

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1877. Let me pick up the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in the year 1878.

On page 66 of the February 8, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have this description by A. J. Cranstoun of wonders witnessed at a seance:

"The first manifestation was a white, vapoury cloud appearing on the floor in front of Dr. Monck, out of which in a minute or so was developed a female form—a girl clad in white. When we greeted her as Alice (who had often previously manifested herself), she nodded her head in assent, and, at Dr. Monck's request, clapped her hands.... She remained some minutes, after which she appeared to sink into the floor beside Dr. Monck."

On page 126 of the March 15, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualis*t, we have this very interesting account by a Baroness Von Vay. She refers to automatic writing, a technique in which some person holds a pen to a paper, and waits for some spiritual influence to cause a writing the person holding the pen never seemed to will:

"I was one day writing automatically, under the influence of my guides, when I suddenly felt my arm impelled by a strange and unknown power, and the following was written in large letters :—'I am here, Joseph Schmied.' As I had never known any one of that name, and many people called Schmied die in a day, I suspected that I was being imposed upon, and asked, 'What Schmied?' 'I, Jacob Schmied, died to-day, in Vienna, Hernals, of disease of the throat; help me. The day after to-morrow you will see my death in the newspaper.' I awaited with impatience the day mentioned, and on looking over the list of deaths in that day's paper I found—'Died, from disease of the throat, in Vienna, Hernals, Jacob Schmied.' The date of his death was also the same as that of the day on which I received his message."

On page 133 of the March 22, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account of a very persistent apparition: a first-hand tale of a ghost that kept showing up for more than two years. The account is written by William H. Harrison. He tells of a person getting the report from his sister. Harrison then interviewed the sister to get the account first-hand. Harrison

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

says he wrote down using shorthand the account below from the claimant, a woman named Mrs. Bentley.

"By the light of the candle I saw my departed sister standing in the doorway ; she upraised her two hands to the level of her head, with the fingers pointing upwards, and said—'Ann ! How's Harry?' ....She came in; there was no door for her to pass through in the bedroom of our cottage ; my father, my mother, the minister, our next-door neighbour, and myself, all saw her by the light of the candle in the room. She was just exactly the same as in life; had on the same boots and everything. The minister, who was very white, said to her— ' What is your trouble ?' My sister replied—'I will come as long as I can come.' The minister, who was fearfully nervous, said—' I never saw anything like this in my life before.' My sister then walked out into the next room, and the minister remarked—' I could never have believed this if I had not seen it.' ***From that time the spirit came to my house regularly every night for rather less than two-years and-a-half,*** *but she never did any more talking....Rather more than two years after my sister's death, her husband, John Sammons, married again, and took the two children from me to his house. That night he was pulled out of bed by the spirit, and there were great noises in the house. These disturbances were powerful during the whole of the next month ; afterwards they moderated, but lasted for two years—for the time he had the children with him. My sister had been his second wife. The third looked pale and miserable; she told me that there was no peace for him, or the children, or herself."*

Harrison states this:

"Such is the narrative given me on Monday by Mrs. Bentley, without hesitation or prevarication, and as given previously to Mr. Cain. I saw no reason, nor did he, to question its

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

truthfulness, and the publication of the particulars will, no doubt, result in the account being well sifted by residents in the locality."

On page 147 of the March 29, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account of a woman who on her deathbed referred to her deceased son, saying, "There's Tommy," just before dying. It is another account of the common phenomenon called deathbed visions. On the next page we read of sea captain who sailed past a distant just barely visible island believed to be uninhabited. The sea captain was reportedly "seized by an unaccountable desire to steer toward it." 16 very hungry stranded sailors were found on the island. We seem to have a case of 16 lives saved by telepathy.

On page 159 of the April 5, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account of a man who seemed to have died:

"Apparently Mr. Schrack died at twenty minutes to seven o'clock on Sunday morning. His limbs became cold and rigid, his lips coloured purple, and around his mouth was the blue mark, generally supposed to betoken death. A hand mirror was placed over his mouth, but its shining surface was not dimmed. His friends and neighbours who stood around pronounced him dead, and grieved for him. A few hours afterward the body was completely stripped, that it might be prepared for the undertaker's hands."

But to the surprise of all, it was found that the man was not really dead. After awaking from his very close brush with death, the man tells that after observing his body seeming to fail in many ways, he observed this:

"I found myself in another land. The vision I looked upon was the most beautiful that man ever saw. It would be impossible for me to give a description that would do it justice.... I saw a great temple and a great throne. I saw my little boy who was drowned two years ago, and my other dead child. I saw my dead wife. But I could not touch them. I saw people whom I had almost forgotten, I saw my old gray-haired grandfather, who died when I was but two years old. There were many whom I looked for but I did not see them. Then the vision began receding, and I can never describe the terrible disappointment I felt when I found myself again in bed."

We have an account of a near-death experience, one with several characteristics of near-death experiences reported in recent decades. See my link here for about eight other such

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

accounts dating from before 1975 (keep pressing Older Posts at the bottom right to see them all).

On page 198 of the April 26, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we read an account like many others I have cited, an account of someone in Burma seeing an apparition of someone he did not know was dead, only to later learn the person died about the same time:

"I had an old schoolfellow, who was afterwards a college friend, with whom I had lived in the closest intimacy. Years, however, passed away without our seeing each other. One morning I had just got out of bod, and was dressing myself, when suddenly my old friend entered the room. I greeted him warmly ; told him to call for a cup of tea in the verandah, and promised to be with him immediately. I dressed myself in haste, and went out into the verandah, but found no one there. I could not believe my eyes. I called to the sentry, who was posted at the front of the house, but he had seen no strange gentleman .... A fortnight afterwards news arrived that he had died, six hundred miles off, about the very time I saw him at Maulmain."

On page 254 of the May 31, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have another account of the same type:

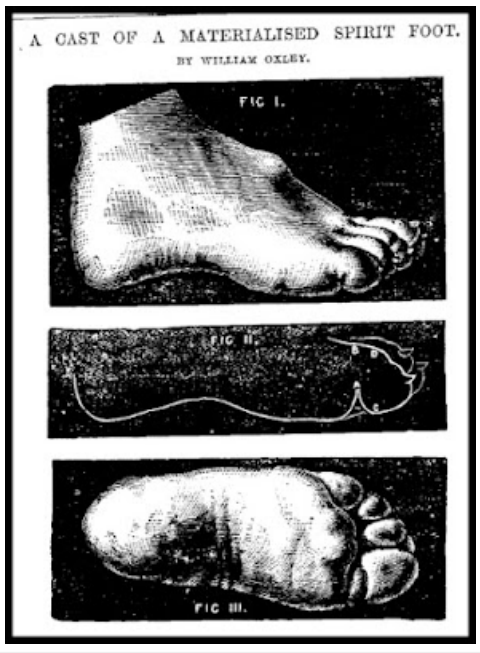
"Miss Anna Maria Porter, the author, relates that during her residence at Esher, in Surrey, England, an old gentleman was in the habit of visiting her house of evenings, reading the newspaper and drinking a cup of tea. One evening she saw him enter as usual, and seat himself at the table, but without speaking. She. addressed some remark to him, but he made no reply. After a few seconds, she saw him rise and leave the room without uttering a word. Astonished and alarmed at this conduct, she immediately sent a servant to his house to make inquiries. The reply was brought back that the old gentleman had died suddenly about an hour before."

On page 296 of the June 21, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we read of an astonishing clairvoyant:

"Mrs. Andrus, while heavily blindfolded, and when entranced (or controlled, as she claims, by a spirit), will read anything, answers readily any questions, discourses on any subject better than when not under control, and replies to questions that none of her listeners or questioners could possibly answer were they put to them. When under this spirit control she describes the spirit friends of the person she is talking to, tells how long they

have been in spirit-life, when and where they died, what disease they died of, and describes their complexion, hair, eyes, and so on, as perfectly as could their most intimate earthly friend....A pad of linen of twelve thicknesses, together with two pieces of harness leather, were placed over each eye, reaching from above the eyebrows down to the opening of the nose, then a heavy linen bandage covering the pads bound them tight to the flesh. In a few minutes she was entranced, and a strange voice, speaking through the medium, called for any one to ask questions, and to produce anything they wanted read. Letter after letter, paper after paper was produced, and everything most accurately read, to the wonder and satisfaction of everybody.... Watches were then produced ; she then instantly described the watches and told the time. Old photographs were produced, pictures of individuals present, but taken in their youth many years ago; instantly she would say whose they were and when they were taken. All expressed themselves satisfied, and all questions were answered till no one would ask any more."

On page 42 of the July 26, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have a claim that a permanent plaster cast was made of the foot of a "materialized spirit," using paraffin wax. We see the visuals below showing the cast.


A CAST OF A MATERIALISED SPIRIT FOOT.
BY WILLIAM OXLEY.
FIG I.
FIG II.
FIG III.

On the next page we are told this:

"*The two materialised forms who produced the hand and foot moulds are well-known, and are as recognisable as any of our mortal friends, for we have seen them at different houses on many different occasions, and have seen them singly and*

together. Once they formed from a white vapoury cloud into substantial and materialised figures, with drapery as real to the touch as that worn by mortal ladies, and they gradually dematerialised before our very eyes."

See my post here for a discussion of a 1922 book which claimed similar results. On page 173 of the October 11, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have this account of a dying woman:

"She kept repeating that she could not die before she had seen George—a son who had given her great anxiety, and who was then on a distant voyage. Day after day passed away, and still the same oft repeated cry, the same uncontrollable longing, the same intense yearning of the mother's heart to look once more on the beloved face. At length the wished-for quiet came; she sank into a profound and trance-like sleep, which lasted during a whole night and portions of the preceding and succeeding days. Her friends, who had regarded this slumber but as the ' beginning of the end,' were astonished on the afternoon of the second day by her awaking in a frame of mind, the calmness and resignation of which strangely contrasted with her previous discontent and restlessness. She at once informed them , that she had seen her son, and added, ' To convince you that I have seen him, you will find, on his return, that he has lost the first finger of the left hand.' The mother soon after passed quietly and happily away. The son in due time returned from his long voyage, and on visiting his mother's friends they remarked that he kept his left hand concealed in his waistcoat, and at length discovered that he had lost a finger. On inquiring the cause of the accident, he told them that during a violent storm he was on deck engaged in chopping wood for some purpose connected with the safety of the vessel, when he suddenly beheld his mother ascending the side of the ship. So great was his surprise and terror that the instrument, descending with great violence, severed the first finger of his left hand, precisely as his dying mother had described."

On page 189 of the October 18, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we read an account by Berks T. Hutchinson in which he claims seeing over the course of years fifteen types of paranormal wonders in the presence of the medium W. Eglinton, including spirit hands and phantom forms and faces. Below is item 9 on his list:

" Levitation and floating of Mr. Eglinton and another gentleman, a private medium, over our heads and up to the ceiling, who at our request, have hammered the wooden roof

with their hands. They have floated horizontally and perpendicularly, both in the normal and trance condition."

On page 246 of the November 22, 1878 edition of *The Spiritualist*, the same Berks T. Hutchinson states this:

"*Mr. Eglinton has been levitated in the light, in the presence of seven witnesses. He was in a state of trance on this occasion, and floated up perpendicularly to my ceiling, coming down again, and re-rising. This was done four or five times. He then rose into the air, assumed a horizontal position, and floated to within nine inches of the gas, which was burning, though not at the full. When he came up the two palms of his hands were put up to his face, as if screening him from the action of the light. We all saw him quite distinctly, and noticed that he was in the mesmeric or trance state. This is, he says, the first time that to his knowledge he has been seen to float in the light, and I consider the fact a great triumph over sceptics.*"

On page 289 and the following pages of the *December 20, 1878* edition of *The Spiritualist*, we are told the astonishing story of Mollie Fancher, which is one of the best-documented cases of powerful clairvoyance. I will not summarize the pages, because I have already summarized the case in my post here.

Additional accounts of levitation are made on page 64 of the document here, where we read this:

"Thus, for example, a patient in this state will not ordinarily sink in water. Dr. Justinus Koerner, the famed and greatly respected physician of Margaretta Hauffe, the 'Seeress of Prevorst,' relates that she became sometimes so light that her body had to be forced into the water when a bath had to be given her. Dr. Maximilian Perty, of Geneva, reports that one Anna Fleischer would in this condition be lifted up mysteriously from the bed, floating in mid-air as light as a smoke-cloud, and drifting toward an open window in a current of air setting in that direction. Margaret Rule, one of the poor girls of Salem, Mass., who was accused of witchcraft by my brutishly but ignorantly fanatical Puritan ancestors, was similarly levitated and so drawn upward by the occult force that three strong men could hardly pull her down to the bed. D'Assier cites...a young monk named Joseph de Copertino who became so psychically exalted that he rose in the air from the centre of the monastery chapel, floated toward the cross above the altar, and embraced it with ecstatic delight."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, ESP, levitation, paranormal phenomena, pre-1975 near-death experience, spiritualism

Thursday, March 28, 2024

Naked Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 5)

Below are some posts I have published about people reporting they saw mysterious orbs with the naked eye:

Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 1 of 4)
Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 2 of 4)
Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 3 of 4)
Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 4 of 4)

Let us look at some more cases of this type.

The late Alex Tanous was a psychic and parapsychologist described in the encyclopedia article here. At the beginning of his memoir *Beyond Coincidence: One Man's Experience With Psychic Phenomena*, he makes a series of claims that are about as startling as any man has ever made. He claims:

- That he revealed to individuals many events in their future, including marriages and the date of birth of their children.
- That he relived crimes in such detail he was able to sketch the faces of the culprits, persons later arrested and convicted.
- That he broke cameras of all descriptions without touching them.
- That he caused lights to go out in public buildings by just willing them off.
- That he projected images on to walls with only the power of his mind.
- That he "separated one part of my consciousness from the rest, sent it hundreds of miles from my physical body, observed the surroundings, then returned and reported what I saw with total accuracy"; and that he "duplicated this feat time and time again, in a scientific laboratory, under tightly controlled conditions."
- That he spoke with spirits and ghosts.

Relevant to this topic of this post are the claims of Tanous that he could create with his mind balls of light. On page 2 he says "I have created floating balls of light in totally dark rooms." On page 53 he says, "I've been able to project balls of light into my hands or into the room, in otherwise absolute darkness." On page 101 he says, "I discovered I could project not only balls of light, but actual images, images which could be seen by

everyone in the room." On page 110 we read that many witnesses saw a ball of light mysteriously near Tanous.

In the Daily Mail we have a very interesting story about orbs. We hear that in 2007 Christopher Bledsoe was at a low point, when he kind of cried out for spiritual help. He says he quickly saw two colored orbs. Bledsoe says that ever since, orbs have appeared over his house every night. We read that Bledsoe has captured 2000 videos of orbs flying over his home. The article shows a photo of a mysterious green orb looking like one of the 250+ mysterious green orbs I have photographed. Bledsoe says that NASA expressed interest.

We hear that there will be a TV program discussing Bledsoe's claims. A tip to web video makers or TV producers: my photographic work on orbs (which you can see here, here and here) could fill up a great TV series episode or Youtube video; and under the terms of my Creative Commons license displayed on this blog, you don't even have to pay me for displaying my photos (but merely need to have a link to this site).

The writer of the article tells us "there were dozens of UFO sightings over North Carolina in 2022, and all appeared to be the same as what Bledsoe had experienced - glowing orbs hovering in the air."

The article suggests that Bledsoe may be able to summon orbs upon demand. At the link here we have a long interview with Bledsoe, who sounds like a calm and sincere person. But alas, I am unable to find online any substantive photographic evidence produced by Bledsoe. It could well exist, but I simply haven't found it. If someone else has found such a thing, please leave a URL link as a comment on this post. What I'm looking for is photos or videos of his orbs, not just interviews with Bledsoe.

The US Congress not long had a hearing on UFOs and UAPs (Unidentified Aerial Phenomena). At the 1:09:45 mark of the video embedded in the news report here, pilot Ryan Graves is asked about common characteristics of strange things seen in the sky. Graves says, "We were primarily seeing dark gray or black cubes inside of a clear sphere...and that was primarily what was being reported...That occurred over almost eight years, and as far as I know it still occurred.." Referring to objects traveling at twice the speed of sound (Mach One), later Graves says. "The objects that we were seeing, they were spherical, and they were observed up to Mach Two, which is a very...non-aerodynamic shape."

At the link here you can read a transcript of the entire testimony. At one point in the testimony we read this statement

by US congressman Matt Gaetz:

"And they saw a sequence of four craft in a clear diamond formation for which there is a radar sequence that I and I alone have observed in the United States Congress. ***One of the pilots goes to check out that Diamond formation and sees a large floating I can only describe as an orb****, again, like I said, not of any human capability that I'm that I'm aware of. And when he approached, he said that his radar went down. He said that his flir system malfunctioned and that he had to manually take this image from one of the lenses, and it was not automatic automated."*

A 2009 scientific paper by scientist Massimo Teodorani is entitled "Spherical Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena: Scientific Observations and Physical Hypotheses, Danger Evaluation For Aviation and Future Observational Plan." The author is an astrophysicist PhD who has authored or co-authored quite a few scientific papers you can read on Google Scholar using the link here, and the author is a co-author (with Harvard astronomy professor Avi Loeb) of a 2023 scientific paper laying out the framework of the widely discussed "Galileo Project" that will study unidentified aerial phenomena (UAPs).

The 2009 paper tells us this: "Spherical unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAP), of both plasma and solid-like kinds, have often been observed in the world." The author tells us that "most of them have been classified as earthlights," although I don't think that claim is correct. "Earthlights" is a term used only rarely for mysterious spheres or mysterious orbs. We read that "The majority are seen singularly, in other cases they fly in a sort of formation." We read this:

"*The Hessdalen valley in Norway is probably the prototype of these special locations, not just due to the many events that are reported, photographed, and videoed (and sometimes occasionally measured) but because of the existence of a permanent measuring station there and the occurrence of many international missions in the area. This location has become a sort of 'laboratory area' that is very well suited for the investigations of physical scientists in general (Strand, website). It can now be confirmed that similar recurring phenomena also have been sighted in other areas of the world: for instance the Brown Mountain (Warren, 2004) and Marfa light phenomena (Bunnell, website; Stephan et al., 2009) in the U.S.A. and the Min-min phenomena in Australia (Strand, 1996; Pettigrew, 2003) are quite well known and have been scientifically monitored."*

The paper makes these claims about spherical anomalous phenomena:

- *"They are most often of spherical shape, of different colours (mostly white), often of long duration (up to 30-60 min, spaced out by periods of 'off' and 'on' phases), and relatively large dimensions (1-10 meters)."*
- *"They are often able to emit a high level of radiant energy. The most credible measurement attributed to them a power on the order of 20 KW in the optical spectrum (Teodorani, 2004a). They are most often unstable in luminosity and are subject to light variability at the rate of a few seconds or less, with no clear periodicity, i.e., irregular. They can remain on for some minutes (while pulsating) and then turn off during a similar duration."*
- *"Quite often the light phenomenon presents a radar track (Strand, 1984), and anomalous radar signatures also can be recorded when a luminous phenomenon is not in sight (Montebugnoli et al., 2002)."*
- *"Many witnesses report that such phenomena very often tend to approach people and/or animals in a way that goes beyond a simple mechanism of electrostatic attraction."*
- *"Some spherical light phenomena have been seen quite often flying close to airplanes (Haines, 2003; Haines, 2007; Haines, 2009). A similar phenomenon was reported during WW-II giving rise to the so called 'foo fighters' repeatedly seen by military pilots. Similar spheres have been seen (and filmed) going from up to down in the streets of some cities. Popular ufology used to call these phenomena 'probes', meaning that they are 'scout devices' sent from larger airships of alleged exogenous origin."*
- *"It has already been said that more classic 'earthlight phenomena' tend to very often occur close to the ground (an example is shown in Fig. 4), but similar light balls also have been seen high in the sky, and we do not yet know if the two represent the same phenomenon or not."*
- *"Observations often (but not always) show sudden and sometimes zigzag movements: this is not at all an aerodynamic motion."*
- *"**Unidentified anomalous phenomena of spherical shape are increasingly reported in many areas of the world**. Most of them seem to be*

> *a plasma anomaly of some type, others appear to be something technological. The dilemma is to find out if they are two separate kinds of phenomena, two different manifestations of the same phenomenon or some third phenomenon we now know nothing about.* ***In any case we have a precious opportunity to expand our scientific knowledge****."*

Correct, so why are scientists continuing to follow a "nothing spooky allowed" rule, and continuing to ignore this important phenomenon of mysterious orbs?

The high energies reported do not match anything in my experience, so probably we have a case of different things with different energies. I have never had the slightest worry about being electrically shocked when I photographed a mysterious orb.

Are you surprised that an astrophysicist PhD has taken a serious interest in mysterious orbs, apparently regarding them as some important reality? You should not be, given that physics PhD Klaus Heinemann previously wrote the book *The Orb Project*, and summarizes his views on the reality of mysterious orbs in the article here.

By downloading the pdf file version of the SCU Review 4.1 using this link, you can see (on page 10) the full January 2, 1945 New York Times cover page story reporting that US pilots had been reporting for more than a month "balls of fire" called "foo fighters" that flew along with the planes, appearing in colors of red, or in groups of three or fifteen.

The news story begins like this:

"The Germans have thrown something new into the night skies over Germany -- the weird, mysterious 'foo-fighter,' balls of fire that race alongside the wings of American Beaufighters flying intruder missions over the Reich. American pilots have been encountering the eerie 'foo-fighter' for more than a month in their night flights. No one apparently knows what this sky weapon is. The balls of fire appear suddenly and accompany the planes for miles."

We later hear a Lieutenant Donald Meirs of Chicago describe three types of these orbs: "One is red balls of fire which appear off our wing tips and fly along with us; the second is a vertical row of three balls of fire which fly in front of us, and the third is a group of about fifteen lights which appear off in the distance -- like a Christmas tree up in the air -- and flicker on and off." Meirs recalls being chased for twenty miles by one of these

strange balls. A Lieutenant Gould said he had seen one of these objects follow his wing tips and says it then "in a few seconds, zoomed 20,000 feet into the air out of sight." Gould said, "We were very close to them, and none of us saw any structure on the fire balls."

The news story speculates that the strange balls were some kind of German weapon, but they never caused any damage, and no one was ever able to explain them. The strange balls acted nothing like weapons.

And speaking of major newspapers reporting aircraft followed by mysterious spherical objects, the Washington Post story here from 1987 is entitled "UFO SIGHTING CONFIRMED BY FAA, AIR FORCE RADAR." We read of the case of Japan Air Lines Cargo Flight 1628. We read this:

"The FAA confirmed on Tuesday that government radar picked up the object that Terauchi said followed his Boeing 747 cargo jet. Terauchi, a pilot for 29 years, said he briefly glimpsed the large unknown object in silhouette. ***'It was a very big one -- two times bigger than an aircraft carrier,' he said****. Terauchi made a drawing of how he thought the objects' looked.* ***He drew a giant walnut-shaped object,*** *with big bulges above and below a wide flattened brim. The captain, who is stationed in Anchorage with his family, was flying the jumbo jet from Iceland to Anchorage on a Europe-to-Japan flight when the crew encountered the object in clear weather over Alaska. Terauchi said the three unidentified objects followed his jet for 400 miles."*

On the page here you can see the current totals (by shape) of UFOs reported by the National UFO Reporting Center (NUFORC).

Unspecified 6388

Changing 3872

Chevron 1713

Cigar 3688

Circle 14083

Cone 602

Cross 493

Cube 20

Cylinder 2431

Delta 1

Diamond 2087

Disk 8602

Egg 1260

Fireball 9826

Flash 2408

Formation 4784

Light 27207

Orb 5562

Other 9957

Oval 6281

Rectangle 2554

Sphere 7560

Star 146

Teardrop 1222

Triangle 12952

Unknown 9860

It seems reasonable to combine the categories of "Circle," "Fireball," "Sphere" and "Orb" into a single category we may call "orb-like." Doing that we get a total of 37,031 for orb-like UFOs. UFOs in this category are more than four times more common than disk-like UFOs (with 8602 occurrences). But for some reason when people think of UFOs they tend to imagine disk-like objects. Maybe it was all that talk of "flying saucers" around 1952 that created such a "stereotype."

We read here of a sighting of many yellow orbs in India in 2012:

"*Units of the Indian Army and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBP) reported over 100 sightings of UFOs in the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir between August and October. Observers described the objects as yellowish spheres that rose from the Chinese side, traversed the sky for several hours, and then disappeared. Despite investigations involving ground-based radar, spectrum analysers, and a reconnaissance drone, the objects remained unidentified.*"

My previous posts here, here and here report sightings of mysterious orbs in Pennsylvania. At the site Stan Gordon's UFO Anomalies Zone, we read more of these reports.

In the first report dated July 28 we read this:

*"Researcher Kevin Paul received information that two people walking along a river trail in Greene county early that evening observed **two beachball sized balls of light** about twenty feet apart flying in a diagonal formation. The spheres blinked orange and white and were estimated as moving through the sky at less than two hundred feet altitude."*

In another report dated July 28 we read this: "Mysterious sounds, small orbs of light low to the ground have come out of the woods and have approached within a few feet of witnesses, and other odd light phenomena are some of the anomalies reported." A report dated July 29 says, "The researchers heard what appeared to have been a tree pushed over, and a bright red sphere of light was observed low to the ground." Another report from the same day but involving a different observer says, "He also noticed several smaller bright objects near the spherical object that seemed to be quickly moving around it."

In a recent story in the UK Mirror, we read this: "Ever since that monumental year, countless residents and UFO enthusiasts have openly shared their peculiar experiences in the sleepy town, from hovering lights to oval-shaped flying objects and **large 'glowing balls**' - earning Bonnybridge the title of the 'Scottish Roswell'."

An article in the British paper *The Sun* has quotations by former US Navy pilot Ryan Graves. Some of the quotes are startling. Referring to "Mach 2" (twice the speed of sound), he says this:

*"What we were seeing were objects, **primarily spheres**, that were traveling anywhere from completely stationary and very high winds, to an order of Mach 2...**We are seeing these objects on a near daily basis.** It would be out there all day. We don't know their origin, [or] what their intent was. We eventually had to start modifying our training so that we wouldn't hit one of these objects and they were getting pretty close."*

Netflix has a new four-part series called "Encounters," dealing with sightings of the paranormal. Episode 4 is entitled "Lights Over Fukushima." At about the 28:40 mark, we have an interview with one of the workers involved in the cleanup of the 2011 tsunami in Japan that knocked out the Fukushima nuclear power plant. He says this:

"When we were searching for people in the aftermath, usually when we checked cars, we would see these bright blue-white lights kind of hovering above a spot like this. They seemed to be floating over where someone had died....In Japanese folklore there's something called a hitodama*, it's like a fireball or a bright ball of light that floats in the air. At the time I saw a number of them out there. It's believed that when a person dies, their soul ascends to heaven as a* hitodama*, a fiery ball of light. I find it hard to believe that, in the aftermath of catastrophes like these, when so many lives are lost, most people would see these balls of light as UFOs. I think most of us would interpret these things as* hitodama*, the lingering presence of the human soul."*

A web page tells us this about such hitodama:

*"**Appearance:** Hitodama are the visible souls of humans detached from their host bodies. They appear as red, orange, or blue-white orbs, and float about slowly not too far from the ground.*

***Behavior:** On warm summer nights, these strange, glowing orbs can be seen floating around graveyards, funeral parlors, or the houses where people have recently died. Most often they are seen just before or after the moment of death, when the soul leaves the body to return to the ether. It is most common to see them at night, though they occasionally appear during the daytime. Rarely, hitodama materialize when a person loses consciousness, floating outside of the body, only to return when the person regains consciousness."*

The 1874 book *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism* (which you can read online for free using the link here) is a very astonishing account of paranormal phenomena occurring around the medium Mrs. Mary J. Hollis. The author N. B. Wolfe MD gives very many reports of the inexplicable appearance of phantom faces appearing near Mrs. Hollis. Some of Wolfe's accounts are corroborated by testimony he quotes from other writers he brought to Mrs. Hollis, such as a newspaper writer named Plimpton assigned to report on the mysterious events. On page 361 he quotes an account by a Colonel Piatt:

*"After receiving four or five messages, **a luminous ball, very dim, appeared at the aperture, grew lighter, resolved itself into a head**, with the features clearly defined, and, for a second, gazed at us from the opening. Mr. Plimpton told me that that was his sister Mary, dead some years, and was very striking in its resemblance."*

Below is one of 100 photos I have taken of mysterious orbs that seemed to be traveling so fast they exhibited a kind of "string of

pearls" effect in which we seem to see multiple position states of a single object. The photo is from my 2018 post here.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: orbs, paranormal phenomena

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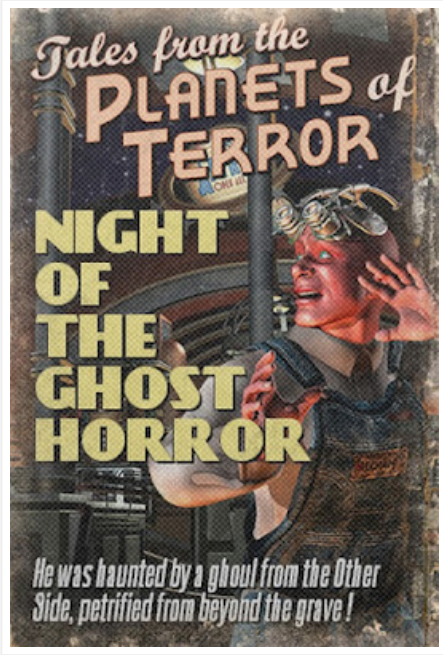
Sunday, March 24, 2024

What to Expect If You See a Ghost or Apparition

In the minds of many people, ghosts or apparitions are something to be afraid of. In fiction we often see accounts like the fictional one below:



But a study challenges such stereotypes. The study *(The Spectrum of Specters: Making Sense of Ghostly Encounters)* was done after interviewing 39 people who claimed to have encountered ghosts. One surprising finding was that 6 of the people interviewed were professors. That doesn't exactly fit the stereotype that people who see ghosts are intellectually unsophisticated.

Another way in which the study busts stereotypes is by finding that 62% of the survey respondents said they observed ghosts along with a friend, coworker, or family member. This challenges the stereotype

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Scientist Flubs and Flops #8

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encouraged by skeptics, that a ghost sighting is typically just a hallucination by a single person. Of course, with their ever-fertile creativity at explaining away things, skeptics will simply argue that such cases are examples of "mass hysteria" or "hallucination infection," or some such thing.

Another stereotype challenged by the study is that ghosts are mainly seen in haunted houses or spooky places, a stereotype advanced by paranormal TV shows in which people investigate ghosts in places like graveyards or abandoned prisons or mental institutions. But the study found that 64% of the participants encountered ghosts "during mundane or normal times in their lives."

The study also concluded that "nearly all of our participants identified either a positive or nonthreatening encounter with a ghost." This busts the "terror of ghost encounters" story line pushed by some cable TV shows. In fact, many people who claim ghost encounters claim to have had a very peaceful experience. One person has explained such a discrepancy this way: "Peace doesn't sell; terror sells." (I can't remember the exact person who said that.) This finding should actually come as no surprise to those who watched the long running show *Celebrity Ghost Stories*, on which celebrities often reported very peaceful and gentle encounters with ghosts, particularly apparitions of recently departed relatives.

To help clarify this issue, I emailed a professor for more information related to one of his papers. I did not anticipate any response, because it seems that when I email authorities in academia, I typically get no response. So I was surprised to get a very helpful response from University of Northampton psychology researcher Chris A. Roe when I asked for details about a paper he co-authored, dealing with a survey he did of people reporting anomalous observations. Roe included a copy of a very interesting paper he co-authored regarding the exact experiences of people reporting either apparitions of the deceased, or a sense of making contact with the deceased by sound or touch or a vague "sense of presence." The paper is entitled "Perceptual Phenomena Associated with Spontaneous Experiences of After-Death Communication: Analysis of visual, tactile, auditory and olfactory sensations," and is authored by Marjorie Woollacott, PhD, Chris A. Roe, PhD, Callum E. Cooper, PhD, David Lorimer, MA, & Evelyn Elsaesser.

The paper analyzes survey data from about 1000 subjects who responded to a survey dealing with "after death communication," a term meaning a variety of anomalous experiences that a person might interpret as being an example of communication or contact between the living and the dead.

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About a third of the respondents reported a kind of "sense of presence" without sensory contact. Question 20 of the survey was: "Did you perceive the presence of the deceased, without seeing, hearing, or feeling a physical contact of the deceased, or smelling a fragrance characteristic of the deceased?" 34% answered "yes."

The survey results get very interesting when we come to Table 5 of the paper. Question 39 asked, "Did you see the deceased?" Some 46% answered "yes." Most of these (60%) said their eyes were open when they saw such a thing. Question 41 asked, "Did you perceive the deceased as a whole or only a part of the body?" 60% answered "as a whole," 25% answered "only upper part of body" and 1% answered "only lower part of body." Most reported seeing such an apparition within reaching distance, with a third reporting the sight occurring a few meters away, and only 3% reporting seeing such an apparition appearing "in the distance." This ratio tends to lend credibility to the substantiality of the reports. Reports of seeing an apparition far away tend to be unreliable.

Question 46 asked asked about whether the apparition looked solid or semi-transparent. 62% described the sight as "like a living being," 12% described seeing something "semi-transparent," and 11% answered the sight was a foggy silhouette. Again we have a ratio that tends to lend credibility to the substantiality of the reports. Reports of seeing an apparition that is a mere foggy shape are easier to explain away than reports of seeing someone looking a living being.

Question 48 asked whether the apparition matched the appearance of a person at the hour of death. 17% said yes, and 55% said no. Question 51 asked whether the figure looked the same age as when the person died. 51% said yes, 32% said the figure looked younger, and only 1% said the person looked older. Question 52 asked whether the figure looked brighter than the surrounding environment. 35% answered yes. Question 53 asked whether the figure seemed to materialize in front of the witness. 28% answered yes.

Question 54 asked whether the apparition was moving. About an equal number said the figure was moving as said it was not moving. Question 55 asked how the sighting of the apparition ended. 15% said it faded gradually, 28% said it dissolved instantly, and 18% said it was not there when the witness blinked.

About half of the people reported some touch experience going on (Question 33). 44% reported that they could hear the deceased (Question 27). But 57% of these reported that the

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

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words heard came as if by telepathy (Question 31). 28% reported a scent being involved (Question 64).

Another paper co-authored by Chris A. Roe is the paper "Factors Moderating the Impact of After Death Communications on Beliefs and Spirituality," which can be read here. The paper analyzes data from a survey of about 1000 people. Table 1 of that paper gives summary results similar to the ones discussed above, with some interesting additions. We read that 90% of those reporting such experiences "knew the deceased." We read that only 12% were frightened by such experiences, and the great majority comforted by them. We read that 20% of the experiences occurred as "crisis ADCs." The term refers to experiences occurring around the time of someone's death, often in which one person seems to get a spooky sign or indication of someone else's death occurring elsewhere, often before learning of such a death by conventional means.

From such answers and data, and from my long study of accounts of apparition sightings, I can make a rough sketch of what you might expect if you ever see a ghost or apparition. You will probably have such an experience not in some spooky "haunted house" you rarely visit, but either outdoors or in your own residence or the residence of family members. The figure you see will very probably be someone you recognize, probably a deceased family member or deceased friend. You will probably see a full bodily figure, although there's about one chance in four you might see only a partial figure. The figure will probably appear close to you, closer than three meters. The figure will probably look solid, although there is about one chance in five you will see something looking see-through or misty. There is about one chance in three that the figure will look rather luminous or glowing. The odds are about even that you will see the figure moving, and the odds are about even that the figure will seem to speak to you vocally or telepathically. You might detect some scent reminding you of the person. It's quite possible although unlikely that the figure detected will correspond to someone who you did not know was dead, and if that happens you will probably soon learn by conventional means of the person's death. There's a good chance that you will watch the apparition instantly disappear or fade away. If such an event occurs, it will probably occur not very long after the death of the person corresponding to the apparition, rather than very long afterwards. You will be likely to get the impression that the appearance served to send some kind of message. You very probably will not be frightened by such an experience, and will probably be comforted by the experience. It is quite possible (although unlikely) that someone with you may share your experience of sighting an apparition. Some examples when an

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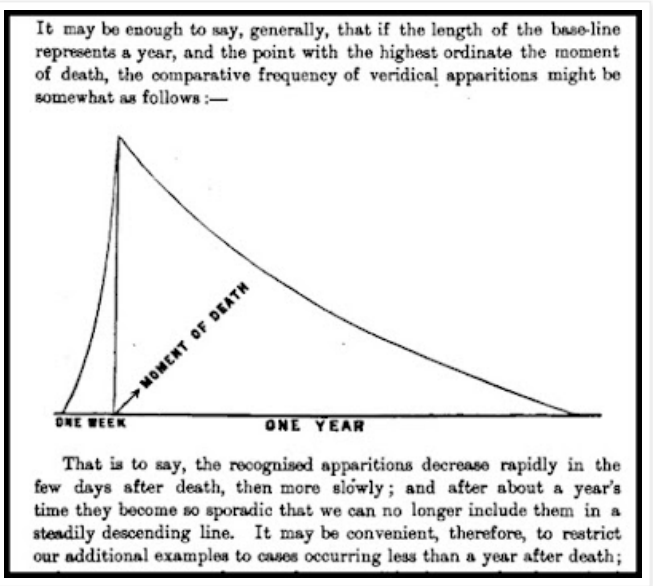
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

apparition was seen by multiple people can be found here, here, here, here, here, here and here.

In an article in the Journal of the Society for Psychical Research , on page 427, we have the interesting diagram below, one suggesting apparition sightings occur most frequently about the time of someone's death, but with quite a few sightings occurring well after someone dies:


It may be enough to say, generally, that if the length of the base-line represents a year, and the point with the highest ordinate the moment of death, the comparative frequency of veridical apparitions might be somewhat as follows :—
MOMENT OF DEATH
ONE WEEK
ONE YEAR
That is to say, the recognised apparitions decrease rapidly in the few days after death, then more slowly; and after about a year's time they become so sporadic that we can no longer include them in a steadily descending line. It may be convenient, therefore, to restrict our additional examples to cases occurring less than a year after death;

There is another type of paranormal event that might occur to you, something not as dramatic as an apparition sighting. The event might unfold like this: you suddenly "out of the blue" are struck by the feeling that someone you know well is in danger or has died. You might be so seized by this sudden feeling that you try to immediately check on the status of the person connected with the feeling. You may then soon find out the person was injured, or suffered a great hazard, or you may find out the person has died. In his 1970 book "Telepathic impressions: a review and report of thirty-five new cases," Ian Stevenson discussed several dozen such cases. For example, on the page here we read that in 1939 a woman named Lottie was "suddenly overcome by a feeling of anxiety" on April 12, 1939 between 10 and 10 AM. She later learned that her mother had committed suicide a few hours before this sudden feeling, at another location.

There is another type of paranormal-seeming event that might well occur to you, something not as dramatic as an apparition sighting. The event might unfold like this: you suddenly observe some inexplicable-seeming thing that seems to have some connection with a deceased person you knew. You may be left with the impression that some immaterial agency has briefly interacted with your environment. There may be some strong

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- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

Other Blogs by This Author

- Head Truth
- Orb Pro

element of synchronicity involved. Here are two examples suggested by things I experienced:

- On the birthday or death day of some deceased person you knew, you may see a mysterious flickering of lights, or maybe a circuit breaker mysteriously turning off, or maybe a clock acting spooky or maybe a smoke detector mysteriously going off even though there is no sign of anything around that may have caused that.
- You may notice some physical item you associated with the deceased person, at some spot you recently observed without seeing such a thing, causing you to say, "How on Earth did that get there?" You may be left with the impression that something appeared "out of nowhere" or was moved around by some invisible agency.

(At the very moment I was typing the word "synchronicity" in the statement above, something spooky happened. Five minutes earlier I had started to watch the first episode of a series on HBO Max, and suddenly --just as I typed "synchronicity" in the sentence above -- my TV mysteriously reverted back to an HBO Max startup screen, just as if some invisible presence had pressed some button on a remote that was an arm's length from me.)

If you experience any events like those I mention above, I recommend making a written dated record of what you saw, as soon as possible after the events occurred. For some interesting surveys concerning how many people have such experiences, see my post here.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 6:00 AM No comments:

Labels: after death communication, apparition, paranormal phenomena

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Firing Blanks: Works Trying to Discredit 19th-Century Reports of Spiritual Manifestations

In my series of posts entitled "Spookiest Years" (here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here and here), I have quoted some of the very many reports of dramatic spiritual manifestations that began appearing around the middle of the nineteenth century. In many different towns and cities and in quite a different countries, a host of witnesses began to report manifestations such as these:

- Mysterious raps that would occur without any physical cause that could be discovered, with the raps very

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Featured Post

Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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Labels

- 'Oumuamua (1)
- 3D printing (1)
- abiogenesis (1)
- abundance (1)
- acupuncture (1)
- after death communication (2)
- age of mankind (1)
- age of universe (3)
- aging (2)
- AI (1)
- alien abductions (2)
- alien attack (1)
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

often seeming to display strong signs of intelligent agency. It was very frequently reported that when the alphabet was recited, raps would occur just after particular letters were spoken, and that when the raps corresponding to letters were put in a chronological sequence, an intelligent message would be the result. Often it was reported that the resulting message would correspond to something that was being privately thought of by someone present and known only to him, or would correspond to some fact subsequently verified but known at the time to no one present when the raps were heard.

- There were very many accounts of musical instruments mysteriously playing by themselves, and sometimes it would be reported that the musical instrument itself would levitate.
- There were innumerable reports from a host of witnesses of mysterious phenomena regarding tables. The least dramatic of these would be reports of tables simply moving after a small number of people lightly touched the table with their fingers. It was also very abundantly reported that tables would dramatically move about when no one was touching them. It was often reported that tables would fully levitate above the ground, or half-levitate in a manner that involved one half of the table rising up in the air, so that the table produced a 45-degree angle (or 30-degree angle) while suspended in the air.
- There were many reports of humans inexplicably rising in the air, in particular the medium Daniel Dunglas Home.
- There were very many reports made by many witnesses of mysterious figures arising out of small cabinets that had been carefully inspected, with the mysterious figures often described as walking around and speaking (a phenomena called materialization).

The people producing these reports caused outrage and fury in writers who wrote works trying to discredit or debunk the reports. The foes of the spiritual manifestations often came from opposite ideological standpoints. Some of the foes were Christian traditionalists who were eager to attack something that they suspected might be a future rival to Bible-based Protestantism or Roman Catholicism. Other foes of the spiritual manifestations were those eager to defend materialism against what seemed like evidence defying the dogmas of materialism.

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
- anthropic principle (22)
- antimatter (3)
- apocalypse (5)
- apparition (76)
- apparition acting like a death notification (22)
- apparition of the living (6)
- apparition seen by multiple witnesses (16)
- apports (5)
- aquatic mega-patternization (1)
- archaeology (1)
- argument against brain storage of all memories (20)
- argument for soul (17)
- argument from evil (3)
- Artemis (1)
- artificial intelligence (7)
- artificial planets (1)
- artificial worlds (1)
- asteroid mining (1)
- asteroids (1)
- astral projection (1)
- astrobiology (2)
- astroengineering (3)
- astronomy (14)
- atheism (3)
- augmented reality (2)
- aura (1)
- austerity (1)
- Australian mystery lights (1)
- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

Perhaps the earliest attempt to explain the manifestations was a very ridiculous one that appeared in a Scientific American around 1849:

*" ' **Supernatural Knocking**. — A ' knocking at the door ' at nights, which has alarmed the good people of Rochester, who attributed it to spiritual agency, is explained in the American Journal of Science, by Professor Loomis, as the effect of the vibration of a dam over which the water falls. Professor Loomis describes this vibrating as producing sounds like a loud knocking on the doors and walls of buildings, and gives a particular account of the phenomena as observed at the dams of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio ; East Windsor, Connecticut ; Springfield, Massachusetts ; Northampton, Massachusetts ; Gardiner, Maine ; and Hartford, Connecticut. He attributes the vibrations to the friction of the running water which falls over the dam, and shows how these sounds are transmitted to a distance by the earth, and produce that sudden and alarming knocking sound in dwellings. Professor Loomis has pointed out very simple and easy methods of checking this vibratory action in the dams ; and the people of Rochester, who have been troubled by an invisible spirit, will find it easily exorcised by mechanical means."*

We have here a great example of a mainstream science publication giving us its laziest effort when trying to explain reports of the paranormal, a sin scientists frequently commit. Anyone making the most cursory examination of the reported phenomena would have known that the reports were of the strange raps giving intelligent and correct answers to questions, something that would never happen because of random vibrations caused by dams. The Scientific American claim also was deceptive, as it implied that Professor Loomis had offered his theory as an explanation for the mysterious raps, when his paper referring to dam vibrations was actually published years earlier, before any reports of mysterious raps were made.

Let's look at a few of the books attempting to discredit the reported spiritual manifestations. The earliest such work I could find is a short 1851 book entitled "Rochester knockings! : Discovery and explanation of the source of the phenomena generally known as the Rochester knockings." At the time it was written, no phenomena of dramatic table movements had yet been widely reported. The book is a compilation of writings with no single author. The first article is by three doctors who show no familiarity with the history of the Hydesville and Rochester sound phenomena. They confess at the end of the article that it is a "hastily penned exposition." They state the following:

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

"Now, it was sufficiently clear that the rappings were not vocal sounds: these could not be produced without movements of the respiratory muscles, which would at once lead to detection. Hence, excluding vocal sounds, the only possible source of the noises in question, produced, as we have seen they must be, by voluntary muscular contractions, as in one or more of the movable articulations of the skeleton. From the anatomical connections of the voluntary muscles, this explanation remains as the only alternative. By an analysis prosecuted in this manner, we arrive at the conviction that the rappings, assuming that they are not spiritual, are produced, by the action of the will, through voluntary muscles, upon the joints."

The conclusion is contradicted by a previous statement of the doctors asserting this:

"Next, it is taken for granted that the rappings are not produced by artificial contrivances about the persons of the females, which may be concealed by the dress. This hypothesis is excluded, because it is understood that the females have been repeatedly and carefully examined by lady committees. It is obvious that the rappings are not caused by machinery attached to tables, doors, etc., ***for they are heard in different rooms, and different parts of the same room****, in which the females are present, but always near the spot where the females are stationed. This mechanical hypothesis is then to be excluded."*

How could a voluntary muscle action from females produce noises "in different rooms, and different parts of the same room, in which the females are present"? The hypothesis of the doctors does not fit the facts. Earlier in their article the authors state this about a visit to the Fox sisters: "From motives of curiosity we were led, with some of our colleagues, to pay them a visit, and, we must confess, we were surprised and puzzled by the loudness of the sounds, the apparent evidences of non-instrumentality on the part of the females, and the different directions from which they seemed to emanate." Clearly the doctors have ignored the testimony of their own senses, which does not fit their hypothesis. An examination of the literature, such as the earliest available document, would have revealed that from the beginning the mysterious raps were very heavily reported when the Fox sisters were not in the same building. And you are hardly debunking claims of spiritual manifestations by making the weak statement that "the rappings, assuming that they are not spiritual, are produced, by the action of the will," a statement which does not actually exclude a spiritual

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

explanation. That's as weak as saying "the apparition, assuming it was not a ghost, was probably a hallucination."

We then have a long postscript in which some writer or writers (we can't tell whether it was the authors of the original paper) offer some ridiculous evidence to try and debunk the mysterious raps. Their evidence is that when they put a pillow under the feet of the Fox sisters, and waited for about a half an hour, they heard no raps. We read, "The company, seated in a semi-circle, quietly waited for the 'manifestations' for more than half an hour, but the 'spirits,' generally so noisy, were now dumb." To claim this debunks anything is preposterous. According to the theory that the raps were caused by spirits, the raps would occur unpredictably, at the arbitrary will of some unseen spiritual agency. You never discredit such an idea by some half-hour observation (or even days or months of observation) in which the effect is not observed. In general, you never discredit observations suggesting a paranormal effect or paranormal agency by observing some time in which the effect was not observed. If I report seeing a ghost on January 1, my non-observation of ghosts for the remaining 364 days of the year does nothing to discredit my January 1 report.

An 1852 book called "Mysteries, or Glimpses of the Supernatural" by Charles Elliott has a chapter attempting to debunk the raps reported at Rochester. It offers nothing substantial-seeming other than a letter by a Mrs. Norman Culver claiming that "Catherine [Fox] told me that when the committee held their ankles in Rochester, the Dutch servant girl rapped with her knuckles under the floor from the cellar," and claiming other similar confessions. E. W. Capron later stated this statement by Culver "was an entire fabrication in all its essential statements." Capron wrote a letter to the editor pointing out (1) that the claim by Culver of the committee investigating at the Fox family residence was false, with the investigation taking place elsewhere; (2) that the Fox family never had any servant, Dutch or otherwise, up to the time of the committee's investigation; and (3) that Catherine Fox was not even in Rochester when this committee made its investigation, but was seventy miles away. The claim by Culver is not a credible one, as someone rapping their knuckles from a cellar underneath a room would not even be audible in that room.

On page 304 of the June 29, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist*, Catherine Fox (then Catherine Fox-Jencken) rebutted the earlier claim by Culver, stating this:

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

"At the time of the publication of this defamatory, unsworn deposition I was a mere child. My family, however, took up the matter, and Mrs. Norman Culver, subsequently, not only verbally, but in writing, retracted all the charges brought against me and my sister....I may be perhaps permitted to state that, as regards Mrs. Norman Culver, she left her husband some year or two prior to the year 1851, and wandered about with a person named Burr, who gained a livelihood by giving public lectures, principally denunciatory of Spiritualism. After her return to her husband her mind gave way, and she had temporary attacks of kleptomania; her husband, in despair, committed suicide."

We get a good chronicle of the mysterious events occurring in New York State and New England between 1848 to 1851 in the 1852 book by John C. Bywater entitled *The Mystery Solved, or a Bible Expose of the Spirit Rappings, Showing That They Are Not Caused by the Spirits of the Dead, But by Evil Demons or Devils*. The second half of the book (attempting a "demons did it" explanation) will be of no value to any of today's materialists attempting to explain these events. But the first half of the book provides some careful documentation of the mysterious events occurring between 1848 and 1852, helping to show the lack of any credible natural explanation for such events.

An 1853 book by Z. Campbell was entitled "The spiritual telegraphic opposition line, or, Science and divine revelation against spiritual manifestations." On page 148 and the next few pages the author quotes attempts to explain the dramatic table manifestations under the idea that it was mere electricity or that tables became "magnetized." At about this time electricity and magnetism were poorly understood, and people were willing to attribute all kinds of mysterious phenomena to electricity or magnetism. Part of the reason was that decades earlier various phenomena occurring under hypnosis were called examples of "animal magnetism," that term being replaced in the middle of the nineteenth century with the term "hypnosis." Scientists now understand magnetism and electricity far better than people did around 1853. Scientists know that magnetism only occurs with metal objects, and can never occur with wood. Nothing that science has discovered about electricity and magnetism in the 170 years since 1853 provides any warrant for the belief that either electricity or magnetism can explain the mysterious table movements and table levitations reported so abundantly around 1853.

After quite sensibly debunking the claimed-as-scientific attempts to explain the massively observed mysterious table movements and table levitations as being caused by magnetism and electricity and noting that they don't agree with what science then knew about electricity and

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

magnetism, the skeptical author (Campbell) then introduced his own explanation: that the reports were all just mass hallucinations. He states this:

"No matter how many persons are ready to testify to their locomotion, no human testimony is to be allowed in the case. It is contrary to all known and immutable laws of nature, but is in harmony with a certain kind of phantasm known in all ages. Under certain circumstances, people have, from time immemorial, seen things which did not exist. But these things never happen in the normal play of the faculties of the mind. To produce them, the equilibrium of the mind must be destroyed by some exciting cause. This cause is sometimes sickness — exhaustion from fatigue — the action of certain medicines, and sometimes fear; but more frequently by something being presented to the mind of a wonderful or marvellous nature...Feeding the desire for the marvellous results in hallucination, or intoxication of the mind. Under such circumstances, a man's testimony is not to be taken, any more than when he is drunk. The deranged play of the senses presents things to the mind, in strength, according to the degree of excitement, but not at all according to facts."

The attempted explanation of hallucinations is a ridiculous one. In the case of the table manifestations there would very many times occur in many different places a set of witnesses at the same place all reporting the exact same testimony of tables moving and levitating in ways that science cannot account for. If there were a group of people together having random hallucinations, they would never all report seeing the same thing as a result of hallucination, but would each report seeing a different thing. There is zero evidence that people tend to hallucinate when they want to see marvelous things. Millions have come to see the magic shows in places such as Las Vegas, and I have never heard of any of them hallucinating when seeing such a show.

In the same year (1853) there was published the book "Psychomancy : spirit-rappings and table-tippings exposed" by Charles Grafton Page. Early on the author takes an extremely emotional tone:

"Shall the silence of the grave be disturbed by grovelling mountebanks, or its stern abodes become vocal through these gross mediums of rappers and tippers? IMPIOUS! IMPIOUS!"

Writing constantly like some raging prosecutor of the witch-burning trials of the 16th century, the author gives us a good example of the type of volcanic hatred and seething vituperation which authorities gave to the people reporting phenomena such as mysterious rapping and mysterious table movements and table levitations. The author's hatred and contempt seems to have no bounds, and there is no insult

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

too strong for him to use against the phenomena witnesses he despises so intensely.

His refusal to pay attention to compelling evidence is shown on page 48. He participates in an experiment in which he is asked to think of a person and how he died. The answer apparently occurred after repeated recitations of the alphabet, in which raps occurred after particular letters were named. The author confesses "The rappers hit it right as to the name" (a Mr. Webster). But he rages that the raps did not give the place and mode of death correctly. But there are many Websters, so would it not have been more logical to be impressed by the mysterious raps getting the name he silently thought of correctly, so unlikely to occur by chance? Having two sittings with mediums, the author produces no compelling evidence of any fraud, and none of the insinuations or generalizations he makes should be regarded as reliable, given his very obvious extreme bias.

Page cites triumphantly that he tried testing the Fox sisters standing on a pillow: "While standing upon the cushion they could not rap at all." This is ineffective as a debunking, because the nonoccurrence of some paranormal phenomena at some particular moment does nothing to debunk observations of its occurrence at other moments. Moreover, a newspaper had previously reported three witnesses saying that three witnesses had previously tried the same test of standing the Fox sisters on a cushion, and that " we all heard the rappings on the wall and floor distinctly."

Turning to the topic of mysterious table movements, the author gives away his attitude when he says, "We were much gratified recently at the remark of an experienced friend, that 'he would not believe these things, even if he saw them with his own eyes.' " The author has nothing to offer as an explanation other than voluntary or unconscious muscle movement. He attempts to insinuate that the mysterious table movements only occurred when hands were on a table. He obviously had failed to study the topic, because by 1853 innumerable witnesses had reported tables mysterious moving, half-levitating by standing on two legs, or fully levitating, all when no one was touching the table.

In 1853 there also appeared the book "RAPPO-MAMA OVERTHROWN: IN TWO PARTS PART FIRST, THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION TRIUMPHANT, OR, THE SCRIPTURES. REASON, PHILOSOPHY, COMMON-SENSE AND RELIGION VINDICATED AGAINST THE CLAIMS OF THE 'SPIRITUAL' RAPPERS," by Henry Wickliffe. The first 10 pages offer objections that are purely theological, along the lines of complaining that the spiritual manifestations are leading to some ideas that are not orthodox Christianity. On page 11 the author makes the extremely untrue claim that those making claims about the spiritual

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

manifestations are materialists. No, they were not materialists, and were bitterly opposed by materialists. The next forty pages of argumentation are purely arguments appealing to scripture, the kind of arguments that will have no appeal to those who are not fundamentalists or near-fundamentalist.

We then have a chapter entitled "The Testimony of Reason" which consists of arguments such as this (referring to mysterious movements of tables):

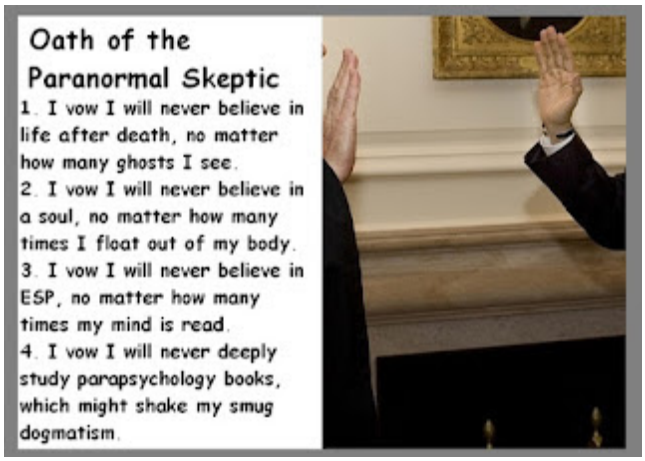
"We would like to see a Spirit move a table in a way that even God does not attempt, for he has certainly never been suspected of being one of the Tipping Spirits. If, then, God does not choose to operate in this way, why does a Spirit ?"

Trying to rule out the possibility of actions by spirits (or by men) on the grounds that God does not do them is an absurd line of reasoning, as it would rule out the possibility of half of the things that humans are observed to do (such as filling out government forms and swimming in pools and raising children and dancing theater shows). On page 61 we have some ridiculous reasoning that if spirits could move tables they could also move houses, but no houses are seen moving, so spirits cannot be moving tables. It's not good reasoning, because it does not logically follow that if spirits could move tables they could also move houses. The chapter has no attempt to explain the reports of tables moving and raps occurring. We have "rhetorical question" reasoning like this:

"Again : where is the proof, that a Spirit can leave its home in the skies ? What powers of locomotion does it possess ? Allowing that its ethereal nature, immediately on its separation from the body, causes it to ascend to the Second Sphere, by what process is it to be able to descend again to our earth ? Has God provided it with an air balloon to travel in ? No, for we have seen, that he does not countenance the movement, and if he does it for a good spirit, he must also for a bad one. How then can the spirit move?"

Such objections are very easily answered with an answer such as this: "We do not understand the relation between some spiritual realm and our earthly habitat, and not knowing that, are not in any position to exclude things we see and do not understand, merely because we don't understand how they work." The author makes no attempt to explain the very hard-to-explain reports of paranormal phenomena that were so abundant in 1853. He had no theory to offer of why people should be reporting mysterious raps spelling out intelligible messages, or why untouched tables would be seen moving about dramatically or levitating.

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)


Oath of the Paranormal Skeptic
1. I vow I will never believe in life after death, no matter how many ghosts I see.
2. I vow I will never believe in a soul, no matter how many times I float out of my body.
3. I vow I will never believe in ESP, no matter how many times my mind is read.
4. I vow I will never deeply study parapsychology books, which might shake my smug dogmatism.

In 1853 there also appeared the odd work "Philosophy of mysterious agents, human and mundane: or, The dynamic laws and relations of man. Embracing the natural philosophy of phenomena styled 'spiritual manifestations' " by E. C. Rogers. An 1855 book has a quote summarizing the underlying theory like this:

"Mr. Rogers credits the existence of a newly- discovered physical agent, 'distinct from electricity, but closely allied with animal magnetism,' and which is identical with the od or odylic force of Baron Reichenbach. This force can be traced in two distinct forms of operation ; one is totally independent of a presiding intelligence — the other exhibits the phenomena of intelligence ruling and guiding it. It thus becomes prevision — intelligent clairvoyance— acts at a distance through matter and space, and thus produces all the phenomena that have been attributed to direct spiritual agency."

A person trying today to dismiss such phenomena will take no comfort from such a theory, which requires some occult force imitating intelligent spiritual agency and acting in all kinds of spooky ways. The underlying theory has no support among modern scientists.

In 1854 there appeared a book by John Bovee Dods entitled " Spirit manifestations examined and explained, Judge Edmonds refuted, or, An exposition of the involuntary powers and instincts of the human mind." On one page the author states this:

"I now say, that all the so called spirit-manifestations are produced by the involuntary powers of the human mind through the nervous force of those persons only who are either in the electro-psychological state, or in the mesmeric state, or in an entire or partially cataleptic state — these three. All my arguments center here, and hinge on the involuntary powers of the mind. These three conditions, it is to be understood, involve not only somnambulism and trance, but every abnormal condition to which human beings may be subject."

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

The author was clearly a poor student of these phenomena. It is true that many of the most dramatic events called spiritual manifestations occurred in the presence of a medium who was in a trance. But more frequently dramatic paranormal events would occur when no one in the room was in any special state of consciousness. In countless well-documented cases, ordinary people (none calling themselves a medium) would gather together around a table, place their fingers lightly on the table, and and witness dramatic movements of the table beyond anything that can be accounted for by unconscious muscle movements. Such table movements would very often be described as including full levitations and partial levitations of the table. As for the rap phenomena, it typically occurred when no one was in any special state of consciousness. The rap phenomenon was reported countless times in the presence of Kate Fox when she was in no special state of consciousness. The rap phenomenon was also reported in endless cases when none of the Fox sisters were present, and when no entranced person was around.

The quote below from page 82 shows how little the author is doing to debunk the reported phenomena:

"It is often requested that some skeptic present at the meeting of a circle shall state mentally how many times he desires the table to tip. He consents, and says mentally four times — I will now suppose no failures to occur — and, sure enough, the table tips four times ! He again merely thinks and proposes thirteen ; and it tips thirteen times ! All are awe-struck at the mysterious nature of that invisible spirit that reads the thoughts ! But do you not understand, that mesmeric clairvoyants have done this in thousands and thousands of instances, and so often repeated, that the experiment has become stale ? But do you object, and contend that the medium is not in the mesmeric state ? How do you know this ? What immortal spirit has revealed it to you, and not to us ?"

The phrase "the mesmeric state" refers to what we now call a hypnotic trance. The author is asking us to believe that in such a trance a medium can have powers of mind-reading, and also of mind-over-matter psychokinesis or telekinesis. You're hardly debunking the paranormal if you ask someone to believe all that; instead you're giving an explanation relying heavily on an appeal to paranormal human powers. It was very often observed that such wonders would occur when no one nearby was in any hypnotic trance, but the author most implausibly asks us to believe that someone not appearing to be in such a trance was in such a trance. The author is also incorrect in claiming that "mesmeric clairvoyants" had demonstrated mind-over-matter powers countless times. There is very good evidence that while under hypnotic trances people could show dramatic powers of clairvoyance (see, for example, my posts here and the book *Natural*

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

and Mesmeric Clairvoyance by the very accomplished surgeon James Esdaille). But I am aware of no evidence existing by 1854 that people put into such trances would show mind-over-matter powers sufficient to move tables. Eventually a researcher would report a young woman with the power to levitate small objects while in a hypnotic trance (as reported here), but those were merely small objects.

On page 90 we have a quote that shows the author is not presenting anything that will be of use to one of today's materialists trying to debunk the spiritual manifestations of the nineteenth century. He states this:

"Though I am perfectly aware that there are mediums and other persons who have become so electrically charged through passivity as to be capable of giving off electro-magnetic discharges sufficient to be heard at considerable distances, and in certain rare cases to move light substances alone, with little or no contact ; and though I conceive it possible for about one in fifty million, like the Seeress of Prevorst, to produce electromagnetic sounds in other dwellings while in the mesmeric state, and for which she claimed no assistance from departed spirits — though I admit all this, yet I now seriously and decidedly challenge any medium in the United States to raise the lightest stand from the floor to the ceiling without contact, or to sit down alone and place his hands upon the end of a table, that has its four legs at the corners, and make it tip from him. I believe that persons have seen apparently a table rise from the floor to the ceiling, but they were in the electropsychological state, and I have produced that impression upon hundreds, yet the table never stirred from the spot where it stood !"

We have here a mish-mash that is no use to today's materialists. First there is the claim that mediums can give off "electro-magnetic discharges" capable of causing sounds to appear at "considerable distances." There is no evidence that any human body can cause sounds to be heard distantly through "electro-magnetic discharges," nor is there evidence that any human body can emit "electro-magnetic discharges" other than perhaps a tiny bit of static electricity. Later in the paragraph the author attempts to insinuate that the people reporting table levitations were hallucinating because they were in "the electropsychological state." No such "electropsychological" state is known to modern science, and the countless 19th-century witnesses who reported untouched tables dramatically moving and levitating or half-levitating were people in an ordinary state of mind. It is not credible to postulate that such people were hallucinating, because we are faced with an abundance of cases in which all of the witnesses reported seeing the same thing, which would never happen if they were merely hallucinating.

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

In 1855 there appeared the book "Modern Mysteries, Explained and Exposed" by the Reverend Asa Mahan. The book was an attempt to debunk the reports of spiritual manifestations that had appeared in the past seven years. But today's skeptic will not find much in its pages that will be of use to him in debunking such reports. The author writes this:

"We were forcibly struck with this suggestion, that they seemed evidently to imply the existence in nature of a polar force not yet distinctly recognized in philosophy, a force having, when developed, very strong attractive and repulsive power ; a force, the direction of whose action, when certain conditions are fulfilled, accords with mental states, and is determined by the same ; a force, finally, through which the mental states of one mind may be reproduced in others, and thus embodied, as in these communications."

The author dubs this force "the Odylic force." On the next page he postulates that this powerful mysterious force is generated unconsciously or subconsciously by mediums, and can explain all of the manifestations of spiritualism, mesmerism and clairvoyance. The "Odylic force" he describes seems to have unlimited powers of telepathy, levitation, clairvoyance, precognition and mind-over-matter psychokinesis. An explanation attempt like this is of no value to materialists. It involves attributing to the human mind all kinds of mysterious psychic powers that could never be explained by brain activity.

In appendixes to his 1855 work on spiritualism, E. W. Capron quotes at length from newspaper articles and "letters to the editor" trying to discredit the spiritual manifestations reported up until that time. His examples make it rather clear that nothing but unbelievable explanations were being offered. He also makes it clear that the methods of the opposition included frauds and imaginary tales of confessions. It is very clear that those eager to suppress the evidence for these manifestations would use all means "fair and foul" to achieve their ends, and seemed to have no scruples in combatting the observational reports they despised. They passed around libels and calumny as freely as an American householder throws around grass seed on his lawn, and seemed to spare no insult in attacking those making the reports they hated to hear.

In 1860 there appeared the work "Spiritualism tested, or, The facts of its history classified, and their cause in nature verified : from ancient and modern testimonies" by G. W. Samson. Using a rhetorical device of letters addressed to particular names such as Charles, the author appeals to the idea of a "nervous fluid," and tries to make us think that this mysterious invisible fluid can pass from one person to another. We read this:

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

"Moreover, since my nervous fluid, like an electric current, courses along the nerves leading from the brain, enters and controls the muscles of my mouth, and causes my lips to utter my thought, why may it not be, when I am put in communication with a mesmerized person, whose personal control over her nervous energy has been overpowered by another, and that nervous energy is left to be subject to the control of any one put in nervous connection with her, — why may it not occur that my nervous energy shall pass over, as electricity on connected telegraphic wires, to her frame, so as to control her lips ; and thus, when I am expecting the reply from her mouth, and unconsciously directing my nervous energy to her lips, through them I may speak out my own thought by an operation as purely mechanical as when I send my thought over the telegraph wires to be spoken out from a distant machine ? I think, Charles, that no instance of clairvoyance can be found in which the thought uttered by the clairvoyant may not be traced directly over to the mind of the person put in communication with her."

There is a very obvious answer to this question. It is that neither two separated people nor two people grasping hands are connected to each other by a linked nervous system. We now know that nerve impulses travel not by some vague invisible "nervous fluid" but by particular neurotransmitter chemicals that travel across axons of the nervous system and jump across synaptic gaps. We now know that no nervous system communication can occur between two people merely when people hold hands. One person's neurotransmitter chemicals cannot leap across his skin and travel into some other person's nervous system if the two hold hands with each other. The claim at the end of the paragraph above shows a failure to study clairvoyance, which very often involved reports that could not be explained by telepathy. And the spiritual manifestations reported during the previous twelve years were very often physical effects such as mysterious raps and table levitations, things that cannot be explained by any theory of telepathy.

A few pages later the author states this:

"Moreover, Charles, reflect a moment on the character of the media [mediums] and on the nature of the communications and, and see if you can believe that spirits in another world are the communicators ; see if all does not confirm the fact that these responsive rappings are the working of our own nervous organism, echoing to our own thoughts. We should not disparage at all, we wish not to do so, the character of those who are generally the media. We allude not to the act that they are generally young, and inexperienced, and females. But observe simply this fact : they are just that class whom we

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

ordinarily speak of as persons of a high nervous temperament, of an acute mental organism. It is the very class of persons in whom the nervous principle is active, from whom we seem to see the nervous energy thus flowing off."

This explanation attempt will be of no value to the modern skeptic trying to explain the reported spiritual manifestations of this time. We now know that there is no such thing as nervous energy which projects beyond a person's body. So mysterious raps cannot be explained by any explanation having to do with the human nervous system.

An 1861 book by William Ramsey discussing the reports of spiritual manifestations was an example of Bible-based reasoning and the most seething hatred towards those making such reports. Not believing in the devil, a modern materialist will find no arguments of value in it. The same can be said of an 1861 work by Samuel Post.

In 1875 the previously mentioned reverend Asa Mahan made another long attempt to debunk the reports of spiritual manifestations, producing a work entitled "The phenomena of spiritualism scientifically explained and exposed." The work has a failure to discuss any of the more dramatic phenomena mentioned. For example, Mahan makes no mention of Daniel Dunglas Home or William Crookes or Florence Cook. Home was reported by dozens of reliable witnesses to have levitated, but Mahan's attitude is "so what?" He states this:

"Much is said in the papers, at the present time, on the subject of levitation, the ascent of human and other bodies from the earth, and that from no visible cause. In the progress of this treatise, facts of this character will be undeniably verified. Such facts, however, as will also appear, have no more connexion with the claims of Spiritualism, one way or the other, than they have with the transit of Venus. Suppose that a human or any other heavy body should rise up before us, and we cannot tell the reason why. What infinite fools we should make of ourselves, if we should leap to the conclusion, that intangible, impalpable, and unearthly spirits laid hold of that object, and lifted it from the earth."

Such reasoning will be of no use to the modern materialist, who cannot resort to "it might have been demons showing off their powers" ideas such as Mahan might have had. Asa's 1875 book contains some extremely bad lies and internal contradictions. On one page he will confess that all sorts of inexplicable wonders really have occurred and on some other page he will say the wonders were all fake. He tells very bad lies such as on page 32 when he says, "Not only have these wonder-workers

been exposed as deliberate impostors, but their impositions, in all essential particulars, have been copied," then claiming that stage magicians duplicated artificially the spiritual manifestations reported in previous decades. No, the most famous names of the time such as Daniel Dunglas Home and Florence Cook and Kate Fox had not been exposed as deliberate imposters when Mahan's book appeared; and the best documented observations of wonders when such persons were around have never been credibly explained as imposture or deceit. And stage magicians were not able to make any relevant duplications of their phenomena under similar conditions. A stage magician who causes someone connected with piano wires to seem to levitate has no relevance to reports in which people said they saw someone levitate who had no such piano wires attached to him. And a stage magician utilizing a stage's trap door (combined with a cabinet's trap door) to produce an effect of a mysterious figure appearing has no relevance to reports of mysterious figures appearing from small cabinets in rooms, when both the cabinet and the room were very carefully checked to make sure that no such trap door existed.

Some of these works attempt the "incompetent witnesses" lie used by Michael Faraday. Under this type of deceit, an attempt is made to exclude the testimony of large numbers of people by simply branding them as "incompetent witnesses." Any person with good vision not under treatment for mental illness and with no criminal record or indictment record or arrest record qualifies as a competent witness. The vast majority of the witnesses reporting spiritual manifestations during the 19th century were competent witnesses, and it is simply a lie to claim they were incompetent witnesses. The witnesses of these manifestations included good-as-you-can-get witnesses such as the world-class scientist Sir William Crookes (whose reports on such manifestations are discussed here), John W. Edmonds (former Chief Justice of the New York State supreme court), Harvard chemistry professor Robert Hare (whose observations are discussed here), and Alfred Russel Wallace (co-founder of the theory of evolution, whose observations are discussed here).

In fact, the people reporting the most dramatic spiritual manifestations in the nineteenth century were very often not merely witnesses of high competence but often witnesses following best-practices observation methods, such as writing up very detailed reports on the same day as observations were made, and very soon publishing reports of very great detail only a few days or weeks later in specialized newspapers, with a full listing of all relevant details, and a full listing of the names and addresses of all of the witnesses. I give many examples of such

best-practices methods in my "Spookiest Years" series of posts you can read using the links at the top of this post. To call such witnesses following such best-practices methods "incompetent witnesses" is just a big lie. It is a fact that witnesses of this type were for many years subjected to very bad libels, slander and persecution (examples can be found here, here and here).

There were two other works of the nineteenth century or very early 20th century that tried to explain that century's abundant reports of spiritual manifestations: Edward W. Cox's 1872 book *Spiritualism Answered by Science, and* e 1905 book *Metaphysical Phenomena: Methods and Observations* by J. Maxwell, who was not only a doctor of medicine but also a deputy attorney general. I already discussed these books at length in my post "They Tried to Set Up a Halfway House Between Materialism and the Supernatural." Both books took an approach of conceding that there was very much reality to all the reports of spiritual manifestations, while trying to explain them under a hypothesis of something like subconscious mind-over-matter combined with various other dramatic human abilities such as clairvoyance and telepathy and the ability to levitate objects. You could summarize the explanations of these books by saying they made the claim "it's not spirits, but mysterious human superpowers." The modern materialist (unwilling to allow such claims) will not find much of anything of use in such books.

In 1877 there appeared the book "Mesmerism, spiritualism, &c. : historically & scientifically considered : being two lectures delivered at the London Institution, with preface and appendix" by W. B. Carpenter. Carpenter's book contains many misstatements. On pages 76-80 he discusses the case of Alexis Didier, who abundantly demonstrated powers of clairvoyance in a host of tests before very many witnesses. Carpenter's idea of debunking Alexis Didier is to claim one or two tests in which Alexis Didier failed. But you don't debunk a phenomenon by discussing one or two cases in which it did not occur. Similarly, you don't show that lightning does not occur by going out and looking for lightning, and reporting that you didn't see any.

Regarding the phenomenon inadequately described as "table turning, " he states emphatically on page 99 "*there is no evidence whatever of the exertion of any other force than the Muscular action of the operators."* To the contrary, very many witnesses in very many places reported tables levitating when no one touched them. Later on page 105 Carpenter refers to some of the more dramatic reports:

"Of the ' higher phenomena ' of Spirituahsm — the " ' levitation ' of chairs and tables, and even of men and women ; the '

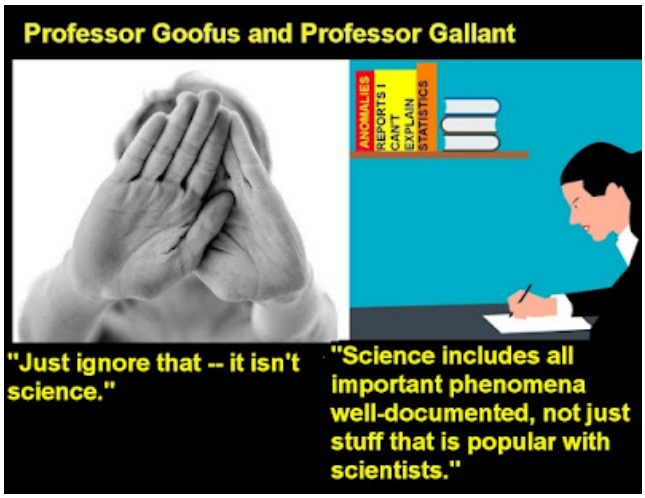
elongation ' of Mr. Home's body, his handling of heated bodies, and his heaping hot coals on the head of a bald gentleman without any discomfort to him ; the untying of knots and change of coats ; the production of 'spiritual photographs ;' the bringing-in of fruits, flowers, or live lobsters, in dark seances ; and the like — I have left myself no time to speak. The very catalogue speaks, to any sober and unprepossessed mind, of the extreme improbability that any ' spiritual ' agents should so manifest their presence. And in regard to the spirit-writing by pens or pencils, I can only say that of the revelations given by its means, I have seen none that could claim any higher character than that of unmitigated ' twaddle.' "

Carpenter fires only blanks here, and in the remaining pages. He doesn't know how invisible spirits would act, so his "they wouldn't act that way" argument has no force. He shows no signs of having studied the relevant literature, so his "I have seen none" claim has no force. In the few pages which treat of the claims of spiritual manifestations, Carpenter has nothing to say of note to defeat all of the observations of paranormal events that occurred. He shows no signs of having seriously studied the literature documenting such phenomena.

Carpenter makes no mention of the books and writings of the world-class scientist Sir William Crookes who a few years earlier documented some of the paranormal phenomena so carefully, some of the very phenomena Carpenter mentions in the quote above (including the levitation of objects and a human, the mysterious elongation of a body, and the handling of hot coals without injury). Crookes works were his 1874 Researches into the Phenomena of Modern Spiritualism and his writings here and here and here. Carpenter's only comment about Crookes is this feeble comment: "I cannot but believe that if Mr. Crookes had been prepared by a special training in the bodily and mental constitution, abnormal as well as normal, of the Human instruments of the Spiritualistic enquiries, and had devoted to them the ability, skill, perseverance, and freedom from prepossession, which he has shown in his Physical investigations, he would have arrived at conclusions more akin to those of the great body of scientific men whom I believe to share my own convictions on this subject." That's a feeble rebuttal, because Crookes was one of the leading physicists of his time, and his reports of paranormal phenomena were reports of inexplicable physical phenomena.

Having almost nothing he can use from the works of the nineteenth century attempting to explain away the abundant reports of dramatic spiritual manifestations during this time, today's materialists will typically resort to just ignoring any detailed discussion of this topic. It's as if their underlying

thought is, "Let's just not talk about it, and here's hoping people don't read up about this."


Professor Goofus and Professor Gallant
ANOMALIES
REPORTS I CAN'T EXPLAIN
STATISTICS
"Just ignore that -- it isn't science."
"Science includes all important phenomena well-documented, not just stuff that is popular with scientists."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM 1 comment:

Labels: paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 14: The Year 1877

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1876. Let me pick up the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in the years 1877.

On page 51 of the February 2, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist,* we have an example of an early account of a near-death experience. The previous page tells of a William Tennet of New Brunswick, New Jersey who seemed to sink into a death-like state lasting many hours or days. Tennet finally recovered, and had speaking difficulties, requiring rehabilitation. Eventually he told this story of what happened during his death-like experience:

" 'I was conversing with my brother,' said he, on 'the state of my soul, and the fears I had entertained for my future welfare. I found myself in an instant in another state of existence, under the direction of a superior being, who ordered me to follow him. I was accordingly wafted along, I know not how, till I beheld at a distance an ineffable glory, the impression of which on my mind it is impossible to communicate to mortal man. I immediately reflected on my happy change, and thought, well, blessed be God, I am safe at last notwithstanding all my fears. I saw an innumerable host of happy beings surrounding the inexpressible glory, in acts of adoration and joyous worship,

but I did not see any bodily shape, or representation, in the glorious appearance. I heard things unutterable. I heard their songs and hallelujahs of thanksgiving and praise with unspeakable rapture. I felt joy unutterable and full of glory. I then applied to my conductor, and requested leave to join the happy throng, on which he tapped me on the shoulder, and said, ' You must return to the earth.' This seemed like a sword through my heart. In an instant I recollect to have seen my brother standing before me, disputing with the doctor. The three days during which I had appeared lifeless seemed to me not more than ten or twenty minutes.

The idea of returning to this world of sorrow and trouble gave me such a shock that I fainted repeatedly.' He added : ' Such was the effect on my mind of what I had seen and heard, that if it be possible for a human being to live entirely above the world, and the things of it, for some time afterwards, I was that person. The ravishing sounds of the songs and hallelujahs that I heard, and the very words that were uttered, were not out of. my ears when awake for at least three years. All the kingdoms of the earth were in my sight as nothing and vanity, and so great were my ideas of heavenly glory, that nothing which did not in some measure relate to it could command my serious attention.'"

We have here (from a man who beyond doubt had a very close brush with death) a near-death experience account very much like the near-death experience accounts reported in 1975 and later years, including the "you must return to the earth" element so commonly found in such accounts. The account is one of quite a few such accounts I have collected dating from before 1975. You can read the other such accounts using the link here, and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right.

On page 67 of the February 9, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have another account that should interest those who study near-death experiences and out-of-body experiences. We have an account by William Q. Judge claiming that he was able to willfully produce out-of-body experiences or telepathic interactions with others. He states this:

"In my sleep at night, through intense desire and will, I have gone long distances. Once, while down in New Jersey, sixty miles from here, I have come up to this city, and been visible to friends in Mdme. Blavatsky's house. To her house in spirit I have frequently gone.....Now here I have to take the evidence of others. They say that while my body snored, my double, or simulacrum...or whatever you may name it—that is, a visible counterfeit presentment of me—could be seen walking down the passage to the kitchen.... And now as to another kind of experiment. The projection of my mind upon others seemed a

good thing to try. Accordingly, I seized every chance that presented itself, and success often rewarded me. Many times have one or two persons whom I had not previously mesmerised been perfectly aware that even from a distance I was directing my mind upon them, and I have often compelled my child to do certain little things by only looking at her, and mentally commanding the things to be done....A man owed me some money, and failed to pay as agreed. One day, resolved to compel him, I stood up, and for fifteen minutes directing myself to wherever he might then be, I commanded him violently, as it were, to come down and pay a certain part of it. The next day he came in and paid that sum; and, on questioning him, it appeared that at the time I tried the experiment, he suddenly thought of me, went out to collect a bill in order to pay me, and succeeded."

On page 115 of the March 9, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist,* we have this account of prophetic dreams that came true:

"Macnish, in his Philosophy of Sleep, quotes a curious dream of his own, which bears on the question of clairvoyant or prophetic dreams. Being in Caithness, he dreamed that a near relation residing three hundred miles off had suddenly died. He awoke in a ' state of inconceivable terror.' He wrote to inquire, and, till he heard, was in a state of 'most unpleasant suspense.' Three days elapsed before an answer came, and then it was to the effect that the person in question had had a fatal attack of palsy the very day on the morning of which he dreamed his dream. He was in a perfect state of health before the stroke. It came on him like a thunderbolt. The death of Mr. Perceval, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was foretold by a prophetic dream, thrice repeated to Mr. Williams, of Scorrier House, near Redruth, in Cornwall, on the night of May 11th, 1812...Moore, in his work on Body and Mind*, relates that an intimate friend of his own, a diplomatist, had engaged a passage to South America by a steamer which was to leave May 9th, 1856. A few days after the passage was taken a lady, well known to both, dreamed of the loss of the vessel. The dream was very vivid, and was twice repeated. Circumstances prevented M. de S. from going by that particular vessel, which was lost in accord with the dream. This was told to Moore some weeks before it was verified....Gerald Massey, in a lecture reported May 17, 1872, says, ' On waking up at seven o'clock my wife informed me that my mother was dead. Asked how she knew. She said she had seen in a dream the black-edged envelope put under the bedroom door. At eight o'clock the veritable letter came.' "*

On page 266 of the June 8, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist,* we have this account by G. W. F. Wiese of events at a seance occurring about a month ago:

"3rd sitting, May 2nd (five persons present).—Raps were heard distinctly after we had sat about a quarter of an hour. The table rose above the ground, waving and undulating to the right and left. The medium asked whether the spirit could lift the table free off the ground, if we did not touch it at all. This was answered in the affirmative by three raps, and half a minute afterwards the table rose free from the ground up to our hands, which we kept joined about a foot above the surface of the table. This was repeated twice. The spirit promised to produce musical sounds on the cords of the 'zither' after three more sittings. A question put in thought by a lady was answered to her satisfaction."

This is one of innumerable accounts from the 19th century of observations of levitating tables, and one of countless accounts saying that a question asked only in someone's mind was answered correctly. In the typical such account the claim is that after the question was asked, the alphabet was repeatedly recited, and note was made of mysterious raps that were heard after particular letters were spoken, with the sequence of such letters being read as an answer to the mentally posed question. We are told that in the meeting on May 4 "The table rose up and floated in the air whilst our hands were joined about a foot above it, nobody touching it.." We read this account:

"We now felt a cool wind touching our hands and afterwards our heads at various times, coming back to us when we asked for it. Then the table rose by itself from the floor till it touched our hands, and floated to and fro underneath for a short time."

On page 271 of the same edition we have this interesting account by H. G. Atkinson:

"A gentleman has just relating to me the case of a friend with an arm cut off from the shoulder, who is certain that he has a spiritual arm, which lie sees and actually feels with his other hand. He can touch anything, and even pull up things with the spiritual or phantom arm and hand. He says the spirit pervades the whole body, and has the same form, so will exist after the body dies. His surprise is that others do not see the spirit arm as he does. The relator says he has inquired of another person whose legs are cut off, and who has exactly the same impression in respect to his legs, that though bis body cannot stand upright his spirit still can. Neither the relator nor the maimed persons know anything of Spiritualism."

On the same page Charles Long gives this account:

"Suddenly, I perceived among the trees in front of us, and a little to the right, a misty transparency like a column of smoke. It gradually seemed to condense, and glided, while yet undefined, upon the pathway before us, where it appeared almost

instantaneously to take shape as a gentleman of the last century. The apparition was dressed in a three-cornered hat, a red velvet coat with targe lace ruffles at the breast and sleeve...After thus standing on the path for perhaps a minute, the ghost (if such indeed it was) dissolved into mist, which slowly faded away. My companion did not see anything, but felt a cold shudder run through him, though I had not then informed him of what I saw."

On page 65 of the August 10, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account by a chemist named A. Comera, who gives his address. Comera tells of seeing an apparition that was seen repeatedly, for long periods of time. We read this:

" The facts I allude to took place about fifteen months ago. My wife, waking me up suddenly in the middle of the night, cried out, 'Michael, Death !' I opened my eyes and beheld V----- on his knees on my chest, looking fixedly at me. Without being the least put out by the unexpected apparition, nor astonished at the singular fashion in which it presented itself, I cheered my wife, saying, ' Holloa, why here is my friend V—— ! What brings you here ? ' I then begged V----- to get off me, and to sit down; for, in fact, he incommoded me dreadfully; he weighed so heavily on my chest. V----- sat himself down on the side of the bed, and told me that he was just dead, and as soon as it was over he determined to pay me a visit on account of our old friendship. Then he added, 'I will come during three days and three nights, and will teach you the key twist (tour de cle). You know I mean that Italian fencing thrust {coup d'escrime) which you never could get hold of at the time when you were my pupil. This thrust will be of service to you, for before very long you will be challenged to a duel, and this thrust will get you out of the affair (te tirera de I'affaire).' "

Comera then says he saw this apparition by his side "the whole of the day," and soon learned that this V----- had died just before the apparition first appeared. Comera says he learned a fencing maneuver from the apparition, which soon came in handy because of a sword fight Comera got into. You could entitle the whole account "The Ghost Who Taught a Fencing Lesson."

On page 131 of the September 14, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we read this:

"The following phenomenon was witnessed at the death-bed of an old lady who recently died in this city, and was related to the writer by two members of the party present. Between the hours of four and five in the morning, while four women were watching in the chamber of death, loud knockings were heard

by all of them on the head-board of the bedstead. Soon beautiful music was heard outside of the back window, which approached nearer and nearer, until it entered the room and filled it with melody. After these sweet sounds had entered the room, one of the ladies asked another if she heard anything. ‘ Yes,’ said she, 'I heard beautiful music.’ The two other watchers heard it distinctly ; so did the dying one, who feebly spoke and said, Sweet music ; sweet music."

On page 162 of the October 5, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist,* we read a Thomas Colley give a long report of viewing astonishing phenomena. He states this, using some rather "purple prose":

"I have just witnessed the most marvellous materialisation phenomenon I have ever heard of or can conceive....Dr. Monck, under control of ' Samuel,' was, by the light of the lamp—-the writer not being a yard away from him—seen by all to be the living gate for the extrusion of spirit forms from the realm of mind into this world of matter: for standing forth thus plainly before us, the psychic or spirit-form was seen to grow out of his left side. First several faces one after another, of great beauty appeared, and in amazement we saw, and as I was suffered to stand close up to the medium, even touching him, I saw most plainly—several times, a perfect face and form of an exquisite womanhood partially issue from Dr. Monck, about the region of the heart. Then, after several attempts, a full formed figure, in a nebulous condition at first, but growing solider as it issued from the medium, left Dr. Monck, and stood, a separate individuality, two or three feet off, bound to him by a slender attachment as of gossamer, which at my request, Samuel in control severed with the medium’s left hand ; and there stood embodied a spirit form of unutterable loveliness, robed in attire spirit-spun—a meshy web-work from no mortal loom, of a fleeciness inimitable and of transfiguration whiteness truly glistening....I saw him receive back the lovely birth of the invisible spheres into his very person ; and, as I gazed for the last time on the sweet face of the disintegrating spirit, within three or four inches of the features, I marked its fair aspect, eyes, hair, and delicate complexion, and kissed the dainty hand, as, in process of absorption, it dissolved, and saw the angel face disappear and fade, as it was drawn, positively, into the bosom of the medium. Gazing thus closely, with awe and breathless interest, did I, there-fore, watch the departure of our angel friend, and, through the living gate and avenue of the medium’s very self, did I, with feelings indescribable, mark the steps of her progress to regain, through the living organism and body of Dr. Monck, her home in the viewless spheres."

This rather sounds like the same phenomenon that was documented very carefully by Schrenck-Notzing in his 1923

book *Phenomena of Materialization*, as I discuss in my post here. Schrenck-Notzing spent four years investigating Marthe Beraud (referred to in the book as Eva C.) under very carefully controlled conditions, and produced an extremely detailed book describing a vast assortment of inexplicable phenomena he observed in her presence. The book includes more than 50 clear photos of the seemingly paranormal. Schrenck-Notzing makes frequent reports of things such as "spirit hands" appearing and disappearing, "materialized heads" appearing out of parts of Beraud's body, and equally astonishing things. Schrenck-Notzing took careful precautions to prevent fraud, such as placing the medium in a small "cabinet" (actually just a small corner of a room with a curtain in front of it) that was always carefully checked, and even often arranging for a full body examination before the phenomena were produced. Under conditions that should have prevented all possibility of fraud, the most inexplicable phenomena were produced on many different days. Below is a photo from that book (from the page here).

In the October 12, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist*, page 174, we have this account by Alfred Russel Wallace (co-founder of the theory of evolution by natural selection) of seemingly miraculous writing on a slate:

"The sitting was at a private house in Richmond, on the 21st of last month. Two ladies and three gentlemen were present, besides myself and the medium, Dr. Monck. A shaded candle was in the room, giving light sufficient to see every object on the table round which we sat. Four small

and common slates were on the table. Of these I chose two, and after carefully cleaning and placing a small fragment of pencil between them, I tied them together with a strong cord, passed around them both lengthways and crosswise, so as effectually to prevent the slates from moving on each other. I then laid them flat on the table, without losing sight of them for an instant. Dr. Monck placed the fingers of both hands on them, while I and a lady sitting opposite me placed our hands on the corners of the slates. From this position our hands never moved, till I untied them to ascertain the result. After waiting a minute or two, Dr. Monck asked me to name any short word I wished to be written on the slate. I named the word 'God.' He then ask me to say how I wished it written. I replied, ' lengthways of the slate;' then if I wished it written with a large or small ' g,' and I chose a capital 'G.' In a very short time writing was heard on the slate. The medium's hands were convulsively withdrawn, and I then myself untied the cord (which was a strong silk watch-guard, lent by one of the visitors), and on opening the slates, found on the lower one the word I had asked for, written in the manner I had requested, the writing being somewhat faint and laboured, but perfectly legible. The slate with the writing on it is now in my possession. The essential features of this experiment are—that I myself cleaned and tied up the slates, that I kept my hand on them all the time, that they never went out of my sight for a moment, and that I named the word to be written and the manner of writing it after they were thus secured and held by me."

We have on the same page an Edward T. Bennett stating, "I was present on this occasion, and certify that Mr. Wallace's account of what happened is correct." A very similar account is given on page 2 of the September 29, 1877 edition of the Banner of Light, by a John Wetherbee.

On page 192 of the October 19, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we hear this startling story of a prophetic apparition:

"While we were gazing, and talking, and calling, Rhoda herself came down stairs, where she had left Lucy asleep, and stood with us, while we all saw, in the full blaze of the sun, the woman with the child in her arms slowly sink, sink, sink, into the ground, until she disappeared from sight. Then a great silence fell upon us all. In our hearts we all believed it to be a warning of sorrow—of what we knew not. When Rhoda and Lucy both

died, then we knew. Rhoda died the next autumn, Lucy a month later."

On page 198 of the October 26, 1877 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we hear this account of materialization, similar to the one previously quoted, and similar to the effect documented so carefully in the *Phenomena of Materialization* book mentioned above:

"By degrees a faint cloud of white, at first like a fine white mist, appeared by his left side, and in the course of a minute or two, during which the medium gasped and shuddered convulsively, a small, but perfectly formed figure of a child, a little under or about four feet in height, grew by his side. This figure seemed to be united to the medium by a line of white mist, but the light was not good enough to enable me to say positively that it was so. The child was, undoubtedly, a separate entity, distinct from the medium."

Later (on page 201) in the same edition a different witness makes these claims, which remind you of the "I'm melting!" scene in *The Wizard of Oz:*

"I have seen hands, and arms, and the face only, and I have seen full forms appear and disappear. I have seen a tall man appear, and after many minutes with us, and in a good light, I have seen him gradually sink down, and become invisible, all but a few inches of form, and then that seemed to snap out. I have seen a full form dissolve, and leave the garments suspended as if held up by a hand; and I have seen the form shrink away to nothing visible, and leave the garments lying along the floor. These not long after disappeared."

The years 1877 and 1878 were the years in which there occurred the "Watseka Wonder" case, one of the most astonishing and evidential cases in the history of the paranormal. It was a case in which a living human seemed to be possessed for months by the spirit of a deceased person. I described the case at length in my previous post "When Minds Seem to Borrow Bodies."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 6:00 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, ESP, levitation, near death experience, paranormal phenomena, pre-1975 near-death experience, precognition

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Friday, March 8, 2024

Scientists Too Often Give Us Their Laziest Efforts When Writing About the Paranormal

It seems that when mainstream scientists other than parapsychologists write about the paranormal, they usually give us their laziest efforts, failing to be diligent in either scholarship or logic. It's as if their rule was: when writing about the paranormal, just "phone it in." An example of the lazy responses scientists gave to the US Congress UFO hearing is a tweet by physicist Brian Cox, in which he stated, "I watched a few clips and saw some people who seemed to believe stuff saying extraordinary things without presenting extraordinary evidence." How very lazy, to scold people based on impressions got after you just "watched a few clips" rather than watching the entire hearing (easily available on youtube.com) or reading a full transcript of the testimony. In the post here I mention some extremely lazy-sounding writing by two astronomers who discussed UFOs in a manner leaving us with the impression that the astronomers had dashed off their literary efforts without thinking very carefully, and gave us the impression that they had never seriously studied the topics of UFOs. Then there's a certain widely-quoted psychologist who seems to resort to very lazy "shame the witnesses" gaslighting most of the times he is asked by the press to comment on some type of report of the paranormal.

Recently I read an additional example of an astronomer writing about the paranormal, giving us what sounds like his laziest and lamest efforts. The example was an article by astrophysicist Paul Sutter entitled "The key to fighting pseudoscience isn't mockery—it's empathy." The title is self-contradictory. "Pseudoscience" is a mocking abusive term skeptics use about any observational reports that they do not wish to admit are real. Sutter's continual use of the abusive term "pseudoscience" throughout his article to

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Scientist Flubs and Flops #8

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refer to various observational reports or theories he does not wish to believe in is itself an example of mockery, not empathy.

Sutter writes a long lazy article that seems scholarship-free, rather as if he couldn't be bothered to do a Google search. He shows not the slightest evidence of having studied any reports of anomalous phenomena such as UFOs or apparitions. There is nothing surprising about this. What we should always remember is that the vast majority of physical scientists have never seriously studied any of the vast literature documenting observations of inexplicable phenomena. Such scientists follow a "nothing spooky allowed" rule that controls their speech and their reading. One of the worst mistakes you can make is to assume that scientist specialists are generalist scholars. The vast majority are not. When a physical scientist such as an astronomer makes one of his rare mentions of the paranormal, you should remember that in all likelihood such a scientist has not read even one of the 100 top books he should have read before speaking on such a topic.

The subtitle of Sutter's article makes this claim: "Evidence shows that shoving data in peoples' faces doesn't work to change minds." No, that isn't true. Citing facts may not work as well as someone might hope, but presenting facts does help to change many minds. Why would someone such as Sutter wish to cite so ridiculous a principle? The answer is probably that Sutter does not want to get into arguing about evidence because he has not done any of the relevant study he should have done if he wanted to combat the opinions he does not want people to believe in. Of course, if you have not bothered to study any of the literature about the paranormal, then the most convenient principle you can cite is a principle that excuses you from presenting any facts, under the lame excuse that facts don't persuade people.

Sutter's article gives us some paragraphs that give us the old Portrait of the Noble Objective Scientist portrayal that scientists like to trot out whenever convenient. In this portrayal scientists are portrayed as having some special intellectual virtue that the average man does not possess. We read this:

"*It involves skills like rigor, where we take our own statements seriously and follow them to their full logical conclusions. Or humility, where we learn to accept that any statement can be proven wrong at any time. There's also fundamental skepticism, in that we allow the evidence to dictate our beliefs. Science is characterized by a spirit of openness, by requiring that methods and techniques be shared and publicized so that others can critique and extend them, and connectedness, which is a sense that statements we make must connect with the broader collection of scientific knowledge. Lastly,*

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science persists in a constant state of evolution, where we always refine our beliefs and statements given new evidence or insights.

These qualities together make the scientific method work on a day-to-day basis. And while any individual scientist will fall short at one or more of these qualities for at least some—or, sadly, the entirety—of their careers, the practice of science is to always strive for these noble goals."

This idealized "Normal Rockwell" portrait does not match the reality of what is going on these days among scientists. In particular:

- In fields such as neuroscience, cosmology and evolutionary biology, there is a very notable lack of rigor in experimental methods. In experimental neuroscience these days there is a massive preponderance of Questionable Research Practices, with such practices being more the norm than the exception. Cosmology and astrophysics are massively infected by speculation-driven analysis revolving around dubious dogmas such as dark matter and dark energy and primordial cosmic inflation, things never observed.
- There is very little humility among today's physical scientists, and much more of the opposite of humility: hubris. Physical scientists massively claim with great dogmatism to understand great mysteries of nature they do not at all understand, such as the origin of species and the origin of the universe's physical structure and the origin of human minds.
- Today's physical scientists have "fundamental skepticism" about various things they prefer not to believe in (such as paranormal psychic phenomena) but the opposite of such skepticism (credulous dogmatism) when dealing with any belief dogma that is cherished within their belief community, such as the idea that Darwinian ideas explain the origin of species and the idea that brains explain minds, and the groundless dogmas of dark matter and dark energy, not directly established by any observations.
- Instead of there being a situation today where "we always refine our beliefs and statements given new evidence or insights," physical scientists for two hundred years have displayed the exact opposite behavior: a refusal to modify beliefs and statements in the face of massive evidence for paranormal phenomena such as ESP.

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

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- Are Public Schools Teaching a Stealth Religion?
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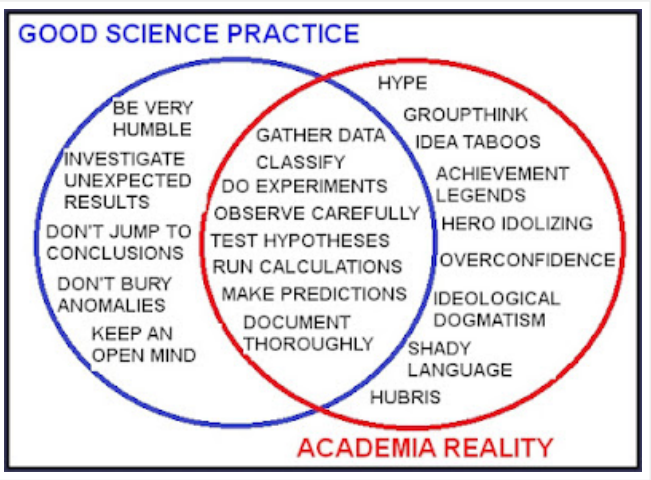
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 Cases
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
- Biological Orthodoxy Flunks the Software Test
- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

The gigantic failure of the majority of physical scientists to seriously study two centuries of written reports of paranormal phenomena (often written by scientists and doctors) makes a mockery of Sutter's claim that mainstream scientists have some special "deep soul" that makes them superior to researchers of paranormal phenomena, particularly given that such reports are of the utmost relevance to explanatory boasts such scientists make. Such a failure makes such scientists seem largely like "heads in the sand" folks or "horse blinder" people or "see only what they want to see" guys rather than those with some special intellectual virtue. The Venn diagram below tells the truth about the shortfalls of today's scientists:



A good rule is: do not trust scientists making generalizations about the virtuous tendencies of scientists. Such statements are no more reliable than statements in which Republican congressmen lecture you about the virtuous behavior of Republican congressmen, or statements in which Democratic senators lecture you about the virtuous behavior of Democratic senators. The table below helps put into perspective what is going on in the belief communities that physical scientists belong to. Below are some cases of social groups in which all members were conditioned to believe certain dogmas, with various forms of sanctions for any deviation from the group orthodoxy.

Social Group	**Dogma Mandated by Social Group**
Ancient Roman senators	The belief that Rome is destined to rule the world, and that local rebellions must be quickly crushed.
Medieval clergymen	The belief that the Church is the supreme holder of

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- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

	truth, and that heretics must be destroyed.
Southern US slaveholders, circa 1830	The belief that people with dark skin are fit only to serve as slaves.
German officials, World War II	The belief that Germans are destined to rule as the master race.
Soviet Union officials, circa 1950	The belief that history is essentially a class struggle that is reaching its climax in the creation of communist worker's paradises such as the Soviet Union.
American government and military officials, circa 1965	The belief that much of Vietnam must be thoroughly bombed to prevent Communist expansion.
Modern physical science professors	The belief that biological innovations have appeared merely because of random mutations and natural selection, the belief that the brain is the sole source of the human mind and self, and the belief that spooky things suggestive of a human soul (such as ESP or apparition appearances or genuine out-of-body experiences) cannot ever occur.

Sutter then gives us this ridiculous statement about the study of apparitions:

"For example, if you've ever watched a ghost-hunting show, well.. first of all, I'm sorry. But you can tell it's pseudoscience because, while ghost hunters use lots of fancy equipment and jargon, they don't apply skepticism and rigor to their own statements. They don't rule out more plausible explanations, and they don't follow their thinking to its logical conclusion. If we can detect the presence of ghosts, then that must mean they

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

Other Blogs by This Author

- Head Truth
- Orb Pro

interact with the material world, which would entail that their presence should manifest in any number of obvious ways."

Scientists have been seriously studying apparition sightings for more than 140 years, since the time the Society for Psychical Research published its massive two-volume work *Phantasms of the Living*, with a total of about 1300 pages, which you can read here and here. Work on this topic continues, and I recently received (in response to my query) an email from psychology professor Chris A. Roe sending me some very interesting recent scientific papers on this topic, including this one. The study with about 1000 respondents found 34% reported a sense of presence from a deceased person and a higher percentage (46%) reporting a visual experience involving the deceased, along with 43% reporting an auditory experience. The 2021 study has this interesting quote, using the term "ADC" for "after-death communication":

"*Surprisingly, 36.4% of our respondents reported that they were not alone at the time of their ADC, and of these, 21.0% asserted that the ADC was witnessed by their companions. Also related to the perceived evidentiality of the experiences, 24.4% of respondents stated that they had received information that was previously unknown to them (often concerning circumstances of the deceased's passing.)"*

Numerous other scientific studies indicating the reality of apparition sightings are discussed in my post here. Citing TV ghost hunting shows to try to discredit the study of apparitions is a silly thing to do. And Sutter hasn't said anything to discredit such shows, which he probably never has watched. His claim that if ghosts existed they would be making themselves manifest "in any number of obvious ways" is a lame piece of reasoning. We do not know how ghosts would interact with the world if they existed.

Sutter is not making sense when he states the following:

"There's more—way more. UFOlogy, cryptozoology, ancient aliens, flat-Earth conspiracies. These beliefs and practices may look like science from the outside, or at least share a small subset of its features, but they lack the deep soul that separates science from other branches of human inquiry."

There is no "deep soul" that distinguishes something like modern-day astrophysics from the study of UFOs or the study of archeological evidence that may suggest ancient alien visitors. Modern-day astrophysics hinges upon wildly speculative ideas

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Featured Post

Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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Labels

- 'Oumuamua (1)
- 3D printing (1)
- abiogenesis (1)
- abundance (1)
- acupuncture (1)
- after death communication (2)
- age of mankind (1)
- age of universe (3)
- aging (2)
- AI (1)
- alien abductions (2)
- alien attack (1)
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

such as dark matter and dark energy and primordial cosmic inflation, which have never been directly observed. The study of UFOs is based on UFO sightings that *have* been massively observed. So for an astrophysicist to play "holier than thou" comparing his kind to UFO scholars makes no sense. As for the theory of ancient alien visitors, one of the first people to advance it was the astronomer Carl Sagan, who advanced it in his book *Intelligent Life in the Universe*. The idea was very respectable among astronomers until a layman (Erich von Daniken) started making lots of money writing books advancing the theory. Perhaps jealous that a layman had mined this goldmine first, astronomers then senselessly declared the theory a taboo.

In the "Why Pseudoscience Succeeds" section of his article, Sutter goes into disparagement mode. He attempts to argue that people believe in the things he calls pseudoscience because it comforts them. You could make exactly the same type of argument to disparage many of the things mainstream scientists believe in. In particular:

- You could argue that the reason why biologists believe in the groundless boast that Darwin explained the origin of species is because this makes biologists feel better by allowing them to position themselves as Grand Lords of Explanation who understand deep mysteries of human existence, and also because such a belief comforts them when they are troubled by massive evidence of design and purposeful engineering within biological organisms, evidence that troubles them because it contradicts their atheist assumptions.
- You could argue that the reason why biologists believe in the groundless idea that the human brain explains the human mind (despite so much evidence to the contrary) is that such a belief allows them to to position themselves as Grand Lords of Explanation who understand deep mysteries of the human mind, and also because such a belief comforts them when they are troubled by massive evidence that human minds have very many capabilities and experiences that such minds could only have if they are God-given souls, evidence that troubles them because it contradicts their atheist assumptions.
- You could argue that the reason why astrophysicists such as Sutter believe in the dubious dogmas of dark matter and dark energy is that such a belief allows them to to position themselves as Grand Lords of

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
- anthropic principle (22)
- antimatter (3)
- apocalypse (5)
- apparition (76)
- apparition acting like a death notification (22)
- apparition of the living (6)
- apparition seen by multiple witnesses (16)
- apports (5)
- aquatic mega-patternization (1)
- archaeology (1)
- argument against brain storage of all memories (20)
- argument for soul (17)
- argument from evil (3)
- Artemis (1)
- artificial intelligence (7)
- artificial planets (1)
- artificial worlds (1)
- asteroid mining (1)
- asteroids (1)
- astral projection (1)
- astrobiology (2)
- astroengineering (3)
- astronomy (14)
- atheism (3)
- augmented reality (2)
- aura (1)
- austerity (1)
- Australian mystery lights (1)
- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

> Explanation who understand deep mysteries of how the universe got its current structure.

I may note that it makes no sense to claim that people believe in UFOs because it comforts them. A person believing in UFOs will typically believe that our planet is being visited by mysterious powers that may or may not be benevolent. Such a belief is as likely to scare someone as it is to comfort someone.

You do not discredit beliefs by speculating about a person's psychological motives for holding such beliefs. After mentioning ghosts and UFOs, Sutter claims this:

"Ultimately, pseudoscience provides answers. Plausible-sounding, reasonable-enough answers. The world is harsh, confusing, and unfair. Pseudoscience gives comfort, explanation, and predictability. Pseudoscience makes the world appear more stable and understandable and relatable."

No, people who claim that UFOs are real and that apparitions are real are not offering "predictability" and do not make "the world appear more stable and understandable." A world in which ghosts or UFOs are appearing is not more predictable, more stable and more understandable than a world in which no such things happen, but instead a world less predictable and more mysterious. So there is no credibility in Sutter's armchair psychologist explanations for why people report paranormal phenomena.

Very frequent use of the term "pseudoscience" (such as we see in Sutter's article) is a sign of investigative laziness. Good scholars investigate in depth theoretical and observational claims, and when they think such claims are unwarranted, they explain how those making the claims fell short. When people are too lazy to do such work, they may just write vacuous pieces using the term "pseudoscience" over and over again.

Sutter proposes what he calls "radical empathy" with people who report the paranormal. What he actually means by this "empathy" is a kind of disparaging belittlement. Under the "radical empathy" he suggests, the skeptic says to himself something like, "I put myself mentally in the shoes of the person believing in the paranormal, and try to understand the psychological comfort factors that are causing such beliefs." Such "empathy" is just a pleasant word Sutter is using for what seems like a recommendation to shame the witnesses and those who study their accounts whenever such accounts offend mainstream scientists.

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

Writing on the paranormal, Sutter seems to have given us only his lamest and laziest efforts, which includes some "armchair psychoanalyst" stuff. His article shows not the slightest evidence of having studied human reports of paranormal phenomena. A look at Sutter's papers on Google Scholar (and a look at about 200 articles he has written for LiveScience.com) fails to show any evidence of him studying seriously any claims of paranormal phenomena. The first article that comes up in that list of LiveScience articles finds Sutter promoting the idea there is some " 'dark mirror' universe," an idea that may make you wonder whether Sutter is throwing stones from a glass house in accusing others of pushing pseudoscience. On the first page of those articles we also see Sutter making the supremely ridiculous claim that life could have formed seconds after the Big Bang, on the grounds that "perhaps it's possible to have life without chemistry." Wow, that idea sounds a billion times more unbelievable than UFOs or ancient aliens.

Scientist greeting theory or claim supporting his belief system
Scientist greeting theory or claim inconsistent with his belief system
"Come in. Make yourself at home, and stay for as long as you want."
"Go away. You're impossible."

Postscript: In an interview appearing today to promote a new book he wrote, Sutter sounds far more candid than he did in the article I quote from above. He states this:

"*We, as a community of scientists, are so obsessed with publishing papers — there is this mantra 'publish or perish,' and it is the number one thing that is taught to you, as a young scientist, that you must publish a lot in very high profile journals. And that is your number one goal in life. And what this is causing is an environment where scientific fraud can flourish unchecked. Because we are not doing our job, as scientists. We don't have time to cross-check each other, we don't have time to take our time, we don't have time to be very slow and patient with our own research, because we are so focused with publishing as many papers as possible. So we have seen, over the past few years, an explosion in the rise of fraud. And different kinds of fraud. There is the outright fabrication — the creating of data out of whole cloth. And then there's also what I call*

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

'soft fraud' — lazy science, poorly done science. Massaging your results a little bit just so you can achieve a publishable result. That leads to a flooding of just junk, poorly done science."

But when asked at the beginning of the interview to name "the biggest problem with science today," Sutter says, "I think it's an inability for scientists to meaningfully engage with the public." Huh? So that's a bigger problem than "an explosion in the rise of fraud" and scientists not doing their job, and producing "lazy science, poorly done science" and "a flooding of just junk, poorly done science"?

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: paranormal phenomena

Monday, March 4, 2024

Do Most Humans Have a Spooky Encounter With the Deceased at Some Time in Their Lives?

There are very many case reports of people claiming to have seen apparitions of the deceased. A very interesting question to consider is: what percent of humans will ever have an experience like seeing an apparition of the deceased or hearing a voice of a deceased person or seeing or feeling something they regarded as being caused by a deceased person ? Will it be just a small percentage of humans that have such an experience? Or could it be that a very large fraction of the population will have such an experience at some time or another - a fraction as high as 33% or higher? Could it even be that most humans will have a paranormal or seemingly inexplicable encounter with the deceased at some point in their lives?

AI-generated art depicting an apparition

To try to estimate such a thing, I will need to examine reports of percentages of the number of humans who report seeing

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

apparitions of the deceased or report having encounters or contact with the deceased.

Survey Type 1: Surveys of the General Public

Some relevant studies are below:

- In Arcangel's study of 827 people, 596 (72%) responded that they had had an "afterlife encounter." We read, "69% of respondents listed some form of visual encounter (Question 4), 19% were Visual only, 13% were a combination of Visual/Auditory, 8% Visual/Sense of Presence and 8% Visual/Auditory/Sense of Presence."
- Erlendur Haraldsson surveyed 902 people in Iceland in 1974, finding that 31% reported seeing an apparition or having an encounter with a dead person. He did another survey in Iceland in 2007 with a similar sample size, finding that 42% reported seeing an apparition or having an encounter with a dead person, with 21% reporting a "visual experience of a dead person," along with 21% reporting an out-of-body experience.
- According to the paper "Psychic Experiences in the Multinational Human Values Study: Who Reports Them?" here: "Three items on personal psychic experiences (telepathy, clairvoyance, contact with the dead) were included in a survey of human values that was conducted on large representative samples in 13 countries in Europe and in the U.S. (N = 18,607). In Europe, the percentage of persons reporting telepathy was 34%; clairvoyance was reported by 21%; and 25% reported contact with the dead. Percentages for the U.S. were considerably higher: 54%, 25% and 30% respectively."
- A 1973 survey of 434 persons in Los Angeles, USA ("Phenomenological Reality and Post-Death Contact" by Richard Kalish and David Reynolds) found that 44% reported encounters with the deceased, and that 25% of those 44% (in other words, 11% of the 434) said that a dead person "actually visited or was seen at a seance."
- As reported in the 1894 edition of the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research (Volume X, Part XXVI), an 1890's "Census of Hallucinations" conducted by the Society for Psychical Research asked, "Have you ever, when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

of hearing a voice ; which impression, so far as you could discover, was not due to any external physical cause?" As reported in Table 1 here (page 39), the number answering "Yes" was about 10%. Because the question did not specifically refer to the dead, ghosts or apparitions, the wording of the question may have greatly reduced the number of "yes" answers from people experiencing what seemed to be an apparition of the dead or a sense of the presence of the dead.

- In the March-April 1948 edition of the Journal of the Society for Psychical Research, page 187, there appeared the result of a survey asking the same question asked in 1894: "Have you ever, when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or of hearing a voice ; which impression, so far as you could discover, was not due to any external physical cause?" According to page 191, 217 out of 1519 answered "Yes." This was a 14% "yes" rate higher than the rate of about 10% reported in 1894.
- A 1980 telephone survey of 368 participants found that 29% reported "post-death communication."
- The British Medical Journal published in 1971 a study by Rees that involved almost 300 subjects, one entitled "The Hallucinations of Widowhood." Rees reported that 39% in his survey reported a sense of presence from a deceased person and 14% reported seeing the deceased, along with 13% hearing the deceased.
- A 2015 Pew Research poll found that 18% of Americans said they've seen or been in the presence of a ghost, and that 29% said that they've felt in touch with someone who died.
- A survey of 1510 Germans found (page 12) that 15.8 reported experience with an apparition, and more than 36% reported experience with ESP.
- A Groupon survey of 2000 people found that more than 60% claim to have seen a ghost.
- A 1976 survey of 1467 people in the US asked people if they had ever "felt as though you were really in touch with someone who had died?" 27% answered "Yes."
- On page 123 of the 1954 Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research (Volume 48), which you can read here, we read of a poll done of 42 students who were asked: "Have you ever actually seen your physical body from a viewpoint completely

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

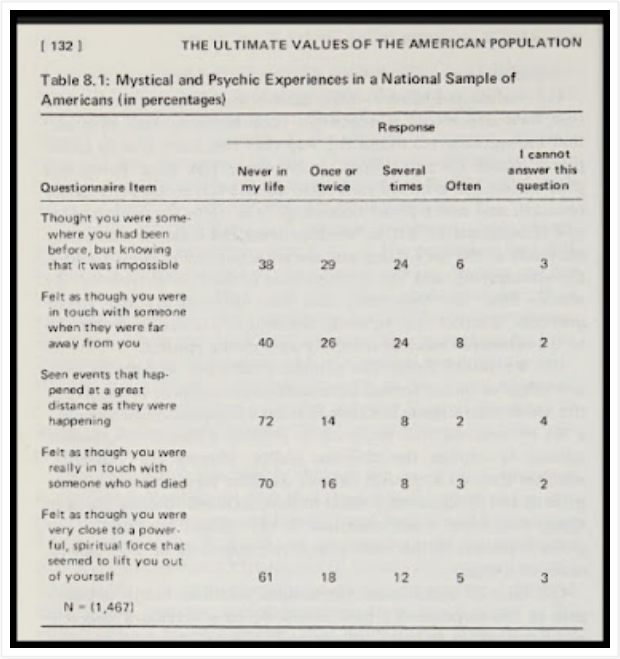
outside that body, like standing beside the bed and looking at yourself lying in the bed, or like floating in the air near your body?" 33% answered "Yes."

- A study found that "Of the 30 interviewable survivors of cardiac arrest, 7 (23 percent) described experiences classified as NDEs by scoring 7 or more points on the NDE Scale." Of these reporting a near-death experience in this study (11), 90% reported out-of-body experiences.
- A Dutch study found 18% of cardiac arrest survivors reporting a near-death experience, but with only a minority of these reporting an out-of-body experience.
- A survey of family members of deceased Japanese found that 21% reported deathbed visions. A study of 103 subjects in India reports this: "Thirty of these dying persons displayed behavior consistent with deathbed visions-interacting or speaking with deceased relatives, mostly their dead parents." A study of 102 families in the Republic of Moldava found that "37 cases demonstrated classic features of deathbed visions--reports of seeing dead relatives or friends communicating to the dying person."
- A paper "Out-of-Body Experiences" by Carlos S. Alvarado tells us that according to 5 surveys of the general population, 10% of the population report out-of-body experiences. A larger number of surveys of students show they report out-of-body experiences at a rate of about 25%.
- A study on after-death communication (ADC) states, "Results indicated that, regarding prevalence, 30-35% of people report at least one ADC sometime in their lives and, regarding incidence, 70-80% of bereaved people report one or more ADC experiences within months of a loved one's physical death."
- A survey about near-death experiences in Australia said that nearly 9$ of Australians reported them.
- A year 2025 paper (on page 102 of the document here) tells us this: *"A spontaneous After-Death Communication (ADC) occurs when a person unexpectedly perceives a deceased person. This may be through the senses of sight, hearing, smell, or touch, but experients might simply 'feel the presence' of the deceased person or have a subjective impression of having received a contact or a communication, for example, during sleep (Elsaesser et al., 2021). The deceased person is perceived in a manner that is*

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

typically interpreted by experients as indicative of the continued survival of some aspect of that person. This phenomenon is quite common, with an estimated 30-35% reporting one or more ADCs, rising to 70-80% among those who have suffered a bereavement (Streit-Horn, Holden & Smith, 2022)."

- A 1976 survey of 1467 people in the US asked people if they had ever "felt as though you were really in touch with someone who had died?" 27% answered "Yes." The same survey found that large percentages of the population reported experiences such as ESP or clairvoyance, as you can see in the answers below.



[132] THE ULTIMATE VALUES OF THE AMERICAN POPULATION

Table 8.1: Mystical and Psychic Experiences in a National Sample of Americans (in percentages)

Questionnaire Item	Response: Never in my life	Once or twice	Several times	Often	I cannot answer this question
Thought you were somewhere you had been before, but knowing that it was impossible	38	29	24	6	3
Felt as though you were in touch with someone when they were far away from you	40	26	24	8	2
Seen events that happened at a great distance as they were happening	72	14	8	2	4
Felt as though you were really in touch with someone who had died	70	16	8	3	2
Felt as though you were very close to a powerful, spiritual force that seemed to lift you out of yourself	61	18	12	5	3

N = (1,467)

From the work here

Below is a quote from the abstract of a paper entitled "Alleged Encounters With the Dead: The Importance Of Violent Death In 337 New Cases" by Haraldsson:

"Personal encounters with the dead are reported by 25% of Western Europeans and 30% of Americans. Three hundred thirty-seven Icelanders reporting such experiences were interviewed at length. Ninety percent of them reported sensory experiences (apparitions) of a deceased person; 69% were visual, 28% auditory, 13% tactile, and 4% olfactory. Fewer than half of the experiences occurred in twilight or darkness. In half of the cases the experiencer was actively engaged or working. Disproportionately prominent were apparitions of those who died violently and crisis apparitions observed close to the time of death of the person who was perceived, although in the majority of cases, the percipient did not know that the person had died."

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

Survey Type 2: Deathbed Visions or Deathbed Apparitions

It seems that the chance of someone reporting an apparition of the deceased (or a voice or sense of presence identified as coming from a deceased person) greatly increases in the last days and last hours of a person's life. The first major reference to this phenomenon that I can find in the literature of parapsychology is the fascinating 1906 paper "Apparitions of Deceased Persons at Death-Beds" in pages 67-100 of the February 1906 *Annals of Psychical Research*, (Volume 3), which can be read here. The main work on this topic (one finding a strong effect) is the work "At The Hour of Death" by Osis and Haraldsson, which can be read here. A survey of family members of deceased Japanese found that 21% reported deathbed visions. We read the following on a page of the Psi Encyclopedia:

"In 2017, Una MacConville carried out a study with Irish health care professionals. The carers reported that 45% of their patients spoke of visions of deceased relatives, often joyful experiences that bring a sense of peace and comfort."

A 1949 book states this:

"It is a commonplace truth, observed by many physicians and clergymen, that a dying person, when conscious near the moment of death, acts or speaks as if he saw standing near loved ones who have already died. Dr. Russell Conwell told Bruce Barton in the interview quoted earlier in another connection, that he had witnessed this phenomenon 'literally hundreds of times.' "

Estimating the Lifetime Likelihood of a Person Reporting an Encounter With the Deceased

Let us imagine you were to ask a large and varied group of people this question: "Have you ever felt an extremely severe pain much worse than a headache, one that lasted for more than ten minutes?" You would get a particular percentage answering yes, maybe 20%. But if you wanted to estimate the percentage of people who will have such pains at least once in their lifetimes, you should at least double whatever percentage you got answering yes. There are two reasons why:

(1) The people answering would have an average age that was only about half of their expected lifetimes. So to estimate what percentage of these people would have such pains at least once in their lifetime, it would be reasonable to double the percentage answering yes.

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

(2) It is well-known that at the end of someone's lifetime he would have a much higher chance of having "an extremely severe pain much worse than a headache, one that lasted for more than ten minutes." This gives an additional reason why you should at least double whatever percentage you got from asking the above question to a varied group with a variety of ages.

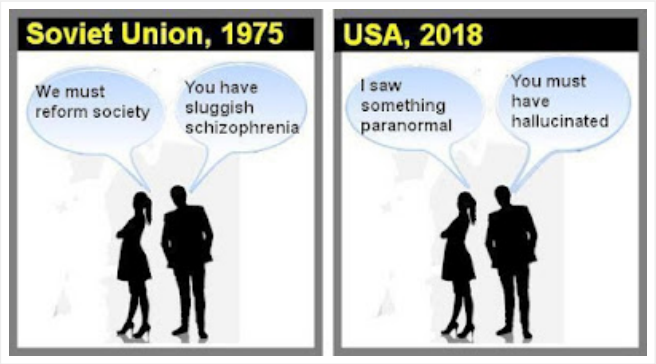
For similar reasons, in estimating the percentage of people who will at some time in their lives have what they will report as a spooky encounter with the deceased, we should roughly double an average of the percentages reported in the first section of this post (the Survey Type 1 section). Those percentages came from surveys of people with a varied mixture of ages ranging from 18 to 80 or more. We can assume that the percentages of people who will have such experiences at least once before they die will be roughly twice as high as the fraction who report having had such experiences at least once in their lives. And the fact that such reports seem to be all the more frequent at the end of life gives an additional reason for doing such a doubling when estimating how many will have such experiences at some time in their lives.

Doing a doubling of the figures listed in the first section of the post, we end up with an estimate that most humans at some point in their lifetime will have what will seem like a paranormal encounter with the deceased. It would seem that a majority of humans will experience such encounters at some point in their lives.

There is a strong additional reason for thinking such a thing. There is a strong reason for suspecting that the survey results given above are underestimations, because of self-censorship by survey respondents. We must remember that authorities in our culture have a long history of shaming, gaslighting, misrepresenting and attempting to pathologize people who report experiences of the paranormal. For many decades and centuries such authorities (including professors, skeptics and clergy) have attempted to portray people reporting paranormal experiences as neurotic, psychotic, liars, fakes, fools or people dabbling with the diabolical. Consequently we should assume that there is a significant degree of self-censorship in which many people who had paranormal experiences do not report them, for fear of "getting in trouble" or being embarrassed, shamed, ridiculed or gaslighted. To help limit such self-censorship, all surveys of paranormal experience should be secret-ballot type surveys, but probably most of the surveys above were not surveys that guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity to respondents. Because of the self-censorship factor, the number of people experiencing the phenomena

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

asked about in the surveys above could easily be 25% or 50% larger than the numbers reported in the surveys.



Examples of gaslighting

There is one other reason for suspecting that the percentage of people who will experience what they regard as an encounter or contact with the deceased may be 50% or higher. The reason is that questions asking about such experiences usually are phrased in a way that may pick up only a minority of relevant experiences, or fail to pick up a large fraction of such experiences. For example, in the surveys mentioned above we had questions such as whether you have seen a ghost or whether you have had a visual experience with a deceased person. But very many people report spooky experiences that would not produce a "yes" answer in such surveys, even though someone may suspect that the experience was caused by some contact with a deceased person.

There are very many reported experiences of this type, having a great variety (as I discuss in this post). For example, at the moment of mentioning a deceased person, someone may report lights in the room flickering. Or someone may report a framed photo of a deceased person mysteriously falling. Or someone may report a case like the one here, in which a circuit breaker mysteriously switches off, or a light mysteriously switches on, while that person was thinking about a deceased person, or maybe on the deceased person's birthday. Or someone may find some type of object associated with a deceased person mysteriously appearing or being displaced in a way that seems naturally inexplicable.

In short, because of all the reasons and data discussed above, we have a strong rationale for suspecting that most human beings at some point in their lifetimes will have at least one experience that they regard as a mysterious or paranormal encounter with the deceased. Such experiences may therefore be reasonably regarded as experiences of the majority, rather than some small minority. The fact that such experiences that may well occur to a majority of humans are ignored or "swept under the rug" by our academia authorities is a sad commentary

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

on the dysfunctional belief communities of such authorities, in which it is often true that never-observed things (constructs of theorists) such as dark matter or dark energy or abiogenesis are treated as cherished darlings, and many types of very abundantly observed things are senselessly denounced as impossibilities.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 6:00 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, extent of paranormal experience, paranormal phenomena

Sunday, February 25, 2024

Near-Death High-Speed Life Reviews From Before 1950

In accounts of near-death experiences we tend to hear the same narrative motifs repeated over and over. One very common motif is a report of the observer separating from his body.

Another common motif of near-death experiences is an account of being propelled through some mysterious tunnel, towards some mysterious light or mystical destination.

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

Another common characteristic of near-death experiences are so-called life review events in which someone may recall the events of life in very rapid succession and great vividness. Researchers of such experiences claim that about 20% of those having near-death experiences have such a life review. At the 26:56 mark in the video below, we hear a woman recall having such an experience while being trapped underneath the water while rafting in rapids. She says this: "And then I was taken through a life review that was like nothing I personally could have imagined." We then hear another person saying this:

"One collection of phenomena are changes in your thought processes. Your thoughts seem to be going faster than usual, they're clearer than usual, they're more vivid than usual. You may have a complete review of your entire life. And this is happening again in the context of likely brain damage, or at least severely restricted oxygen to the brain, when you would not expect much of an experience at all, let alone hyper-acute senses and rapid clear thinking."

We also have at the 30:20 mark in the video a woman describing a life-review during a near-death experience. At the 32:11 mark the woman having the river accident says that in her life review, "I could experience thousands of things all at the same moment of time, but I was experiencing each of them independently."

Claims that such life-review events occur in near-death experiences go back more than a hundred years before Raymond Moody's 1975 book *Life After Life*. For example, on page 267 of the June 4, 1875 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have a first-hand account of such an experience, told by the distinguished scholar William Stainton Moses. He states this, describing a life-review during a near-drowning during a sporting event:

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

"It never occurred to anybody, I suppose, that a man who could venture in a little cockleshell such as I was sculling, was unable to swim ; and so no particular effort was made to rescue me. I went down dazed and confused with the upset, and the shouts and objurgations of the crowd. I remember the shout of the coxswain, more forcible than polite, and then I floundered about until I suppose I became unconscious. At any rate a strange peacefulness took the place of my previous feeling. I recognised fully that I was drowning, but no sort of fear was present to my mind. I did not even regret the fact. ***By degrees, as it seemed—though the process must have been instantaneous—I recollected my life.*** *The link was—well, I am drowning, and this life is done with. It has not been a very long one. . . . And so the events of it came before my mind, and seemed to shape themselves in outline and move before me. It was not that I thought, but that* ***objective pictures of events seemed to float before me, a moving tableau****, as though depicted on the mass of water that weighed upon my eyes. I seemed to see the tableau, but not with the eye of sense: with that mysterious inner vision with which I have since discerned spiritual things. The silky, velvety appearance of the tableau, which seemed as I say to float before me, was very prominently impressed upon me.* ***The events were all scenes in which I had been an actor, and no very trivial or unimportant ones were depicted, though they were not all serious, some indeed laughable enough.*** *Nor was my frame of mind particularly solemn. I was an interested spectator ; little more. One incident of which I had no previous knowledge was recalled to my mind on that occasion, and has never again left it. My memory of it is now as clear as of other things. The next thing I remember was the interruption of this peaceful state by a series of most unpleasant sensations which were attendant on resuscitation."*

In the same 1875 publication on page 268 we read, "Mr. Serjeant Cox said that several persons, on being resuscitated from hanging, had spoken of the memory of their lives having passed before them at the moment of suffocation." Similarly, on page 292 of the June 18, 1875 edition of *The Spiritualist* we have a similar account:

"Mr. Jencken said that six years ago he was attacked by a mob in Spain, and practically speaking he died four times that night, for he swooned away and came to again four times. The whole of his life passed before him like a panorama ; he thus read off a part of his life, then became conscious again of the onslaughts of the mob. A gun was fired at him, the mob disappeared to his consciousness, and again the vision of his past life returned, taking up the thread of events where it had left off. This occurred

four times, each successive reverie beginning where the other had finished."

Similarly, on page 410 of the 1876 book *The Marvellous Country* by Samuel Woodworth Cozzens, we have an account of a life review during a terrifying fall that almost killed the author:

"All this time I was acquiring greater momentum, until it seemed as though I was fairly flying into the very arms of the horrible death which stood staring me so steadily in the face. Not a bush or shrub could I see growing upon the precipitous sides; there was nothing, absolutely nothing, for me to cling to, and the stones and earth which I disturbed in my descent were falling in a shower around me.

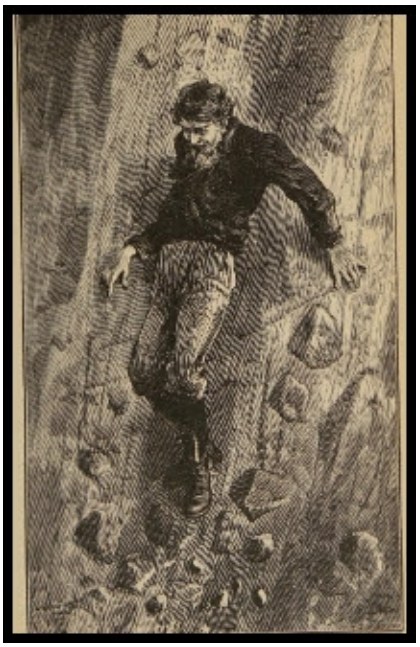
Convinced that death was inevitable, I became perfectly reconciled to the thought. ***My mind comprehended in a moment the acts of a life-time. Transactions of the most trivial character, circumstances the remembrance of which had been buried deep in memory's vault for years, stood before me in bold relief; my mind recalled with the rapidity of lightning, and yet retained a distinct impression of every thought.***

I seemed to be gliding swiftly and surely out of the world, but felt no fear, experienced no regret at the thought; on the contrary, rejoiced that I was so soon to see with my own eyes the great mystery concealed behind the veil; that I was to cross the deep waters and be at rest.

I thought I heard the sound of many voices, in wonderful harmony, coming from the far-off distance, though from what direction I could not tell.

My momentum had become so great that I seemed to experience much difficulty in breathing; and I remember that I was trying to explain to my own satisfaction why this should be so, when the heel of my right boot struck the corner of a small stone that chanced to be firmly imbedded in the earth and therefore offered so much resistance to my descent, that upon striking it I was thrown forward upon my face. This stone without doubt saved my life."

The book has this illustration to depict the situation:



In 1892 Albert Heim produced a paper in German entitled "Notizen über den Tod durch Absturz," which can be translated as "The Experience of Dying from Falls" or "Notes About Death from Falling." The original German text of the paper can be read here. Below is a translation I got using Google Translate. First Heim notes how he got his accounts of people who had close brushes with death after falling:

"*In mountaineering and other literature we come across relevant stories here and there, although rarely. In the Hamburg Laza-rethen in the war year 1870, as well as on various later occasions, I interviewed war wounded. Several doctors who had a lot of contact with victims were able to tell me about their statements. I researched several bricklayers and roofers who had fallen from scaffolding and roofs, half-injured workers in mines, on railway lines, etc. A large number ...who fell without losing their lives were able to give me precise information. Those who were thrown away by the air strike during the Elm landslide and became unconscious told me their experiences. I also received detailed reports from some club members who had crashed and were rescued, from three fellow professionals, etc. A fisherman who had been swept deep under water when the Zug bank collapsed told me his experiences. We have some good accounts of the Mönchenstein railway accident from those who narrowly escaped with their lives, e.g. from a locomotive driver, from some passengers, etc. etc. But what has caused me not to miss an opportunity to write such notes for more than 25 years collect, were my own experiences.*"

Then Heim notes a remarkable similarity in the accounts:

"For the vast majority of those who have had an accident - probably 95% - regardless of their level of education, the symptoms are exactly the same, only experienced slightly differently in degree. In the face of death due to a sudden accident, almost everyone experiences the same mental state - a completely different state than in the face of a less sudden cause of death. It can be briefly characterized as follows:

No pain is felt, nor is there any paralyzing shock that can occur in the event of minor danger (fire outbreak, etc.). ***No fear, no trace of despair, no pain, rather calm seriousness, deep resignation, commanding spiritual security and speed. The activity of thought is enormous, increased to a hundredfold speed or intensity, the conditions and the eventualities of the outcome are objectively clearly seen far away, no confusion occurs. The time seems very extended. You act quickly and think carefully. In many cases this is followed by a sudden look back into one's entire past. Finally, the faller often hears beautiful music and then falls into a wonderful blue sky with little rose-colored clouds.*** *Then consciousness disappears painlessly - usually at the moment of awakening, which is only heard and never painfully felt. Of the senses, hearing is probably the last to disappear."*

Heim discusses a strange increase in the speed of thought:

"Anxiety paralysis does not occur, thought activity appears to be enormously increased, and time is lengthened in the same proportion. The judgment remains clearly objective, and as far as the external circumstances allow it, the person who falls remains able to act at lightning speed."

Heim quotes a first-hand account by one person who nearly died in a terrifying fall:

"Meanwhile, a whole flood of thoughts had time to move through the brain in a clear way: The next blow will bring you a grim death, it was said. ***A series of pictures showed me in quick succession all the beauty and love that I had experienced in this world****, and in between them the sermon that I had heard from Mr. Obersthelfer that morning sounded like a powerful melody: God is almighty, heaven and earth rest his hand; We must remain silent about his will. Infinite calm came over me at this thought, in the midst of all the terrible turmoil. The car was thrown up twice more; then the front part suddenly drove vertically down into the Birs, and the rear part*

with me was thrown sideways over the embankment down into the Birs. The wagon was shattered."

Heim gives this first-hand account of a fall he experienced, noting that his thought seemed greatly speeded-up*:*

*"Then **I saw, as if on a stage from a distance, my entire past life played out in numerous images**. I saw myself as the main character playing. Everything was as if transfigured of a heavenly light and everything was beautiful and without pain, without fear, without torment. The memory of very sad experiences was also clear, but still not sad. No fighting or strife, the fight had also become love. Sublime and reconciling thoughts dominated and connected the individual images, and a divine calm passed through my soul like wonderful music. More and more a wonderfully blue sky surrounded me with little rosy and especially delicate violet clouds - I floated out into it without any pain and gently, while I saw that I was now flying freely through the air and that there was still a field of snow below me. Objective observation, thinking and subjective feeling occurred simultaneously side by side. Then I heard my thud and my fall was over."*

Mentions of accounts such as these occur in published literature as early as 1847. Below is a quote from page 71 of the 1847 book "The Unseen World" by John Mason Neale:

*"The nearest approach that man has ever made to the invisible world is probably in those persons who, having been to all appearance drowned, have been recovered on the use of the proper means. And what is singular is this ; **by all accounts, after the first short struggle is over, there is perfect consciousness, but no pain. It is said that every action of past life is borne in upon a drowning man's mind with perfect clearness ; all rush on his memory together, yet each distinctly ;** and if there be any suffering, it is entirely the moral pain which may result from that retrospect ; for there is no physical anguish. On the contrary, the prevailing sensation is an indescribable calm, accompanied by a pleasant green light, they say, like green fields : the agony begins with the attempt at resuscitation. It is believed that a gentleman, who occupies a distinguished place in scientific literature, and who is said to have been longer under water than any one who has ever been brought back to life, also, in a more remarkable degree than any one else, saw something of those 'unspeakable things which it is not lawful for a man to utter.' "*

This post is one of eight posts in which I have documented accounts of near-death experiences dating from before 1975. You can read the other posts here.

In the video at the top of this post, we have a remarkable example of what is called a veridical near-death experience. At the 22:09 mark a doctor recalls his "first day as a doctor" on a long shift at a hospital. A second-year resident promised the doctor that he would be with the doctor throughout his long shift. Soon a patient went into cardiac arrest, and the doctor was able to prevent him from dying (the second-year resident being absent). The doctor recalls talking with the patient's wife using rather gloomy language, and eating the patient's lunch (which the patient was too sick to eat). Days later the patient spoke to the doctor, and recalls floating out of his body during his cardiac arrest. The patient scolded the doctor for eating his lunch, and talking to his wife using such gloomy language. The doctor is stunned to hear the patient claim that at the time of his resuscitation from cardiac arrest, the doctor was feeling sorry for himself because the second-year resident did not stay with him as he promised. This was a rather embarrassing thought that the doctor had kept to himself, and had expressed to no one.

We have here a good example of what is called a veridical out-of-body experience, in which a subject recalls making observations while out of his body which should have been impossible for him to make, given his medical situation at the time. See my post here for many similar cases. The video at the top of the post at the 22:00 mark has a very remarkable account of a veridical out-of-body experience, in which a doctor reports someone reading his mind during an out-of-body experience.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:43 AM No comments:

Labels: out-of-body experience, paranormal phenomena, pre-1975 near-death experience

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 13: The Year 1876

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here,

here, here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1874. Let me pick up the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in the year 1876.

On page 68 of the February 11, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we read of several remarkable cases. The author Emma

Hardinge-Britten states the following about herself, using the term "the somnambulic condition" to refer to a kind of trance:

"The author, for instance, has been known to rise in her sleep, proceed in thick darkness to her study, and there inscribe musical compositions, and write abstruse exercises in harmony and composition, entirely beyond her normal capacity to achieve. On the other hand, she has frequently been known in the ' somnambulic condition ' to recite original poems, sing original compositions, and make what were pronounced to be 'splendid orations,' in a style totally different to her ordinary methods, and though at the early period of childhood when these feats of abnormal wonder were enacted, her friends and associates...attributed them all to the same somnambulic state, there were marked differences between the various phenomena exhibited, proving that some were the action of the sleeper's own spirit in a state of high exaltation, whilst others must have proceeded from the influence of foreign spiritual intelligences taking advantage of the somnambulist's unconscious organism to manifest their presence."

On the same page Emma tells of a sleepwalker who displayed similar behavior, writing perfectly in darkness, and having no memory of what was written. We then hear this remarkable claim:

"Dr. A. o. Stiles, of Bridgeport, Couu., claimed to have, from a boy, possessed the faculty of perceiving, by a clairvoyant sense, the interior conditions of the human system, and pointing out its locale. In his medical practice he used to give the most invariably correct diagnoses of the diseases of distant persons by holding a lock of their hair in his hand."

On page 246 of the May 26, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account by William Oxley (dated May 22, 1876) of events of May 11, 1876. We hear of an astonishing transfiguration of a handkerchief into a human figure, audibly identified with a woman who died four days ago:

"There were present seven of us, including Dr. Monck, the medium. Taking our seats round an oval table, I sat at one end, a good light from a gas lamp being behind me ; Dr. Monck sat at the other end of the table. After a time he became entranced, and, rising from his seat, came up to me on the left-hand side, close to where I was sitting. Samuel was the controlling spirit. He took a white lawn handkerchief from Dr. Monck's pocket, and placing it on his right hand, the handkerchief appeared to be 'absorbed,' or meta-morphosed, and in a few seconds there, at the extremity of his arm, appeared a beautiful, unmistakable feminine face, as large as a good-sized infant's; it was a perfect

human head, with the features clearly delineated. So clearly are the features and form impressed upon my memory, that if I were an artist I could even now produce them on canvas, The head and face were of pure classic form, and very beautiful to look upon. While I was looking intently on the object before me I heard a whispering voice, at first very faintly, issuing from the head; the words were, 'Do you hear me?' I replied, 'No, not distinctly,' as Samuel, through Dr. Monck, was speaking at the same time. I then said, 'Come closer, so that I may hear you.' The reply was, ' I will try.' I now saw that the lips moved in giving articulation to the words. Dr. Monck then pressed his lips close to my right cheek, which I felt distinctly all the time that the head was within a few inches of my left ear. Listening intently I heard the words, ' My name is Rhondda, and I wish to write to my parents in Cardiff, and tell them not to grieve for me, as I am very happy. I have seen in my beautiful and glorious home, and I shall often try to come through this medium, and hope to be very useful'....From what I have learnt, the spirit of Rhondda passed out of the body on Sunday evening, May 7th, at 8 p.m., and on the fourth day between 8 and 9 p.m. (three clear days and nights intervening), she appeared to us in the manner above described."

On page 316 of the July 7, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account of a seance involving the medium James T. Morris on May 10, 1876. The account states that the medium (Morris) was disrobed and thoroughly examined, and then placed on the right side of a small wooden cabinet divided into two halves, with the two halves separated by wire mesh. We are told the cabinet had been thoroughly examined by the witnesses. We read of several figures mysteriously emerging from this cabinet, including (1) a tall German with blue eyes and a red mustache (unlike the medium with brown eyes and a height of five feet two inches); (2) a blue-eyed man six feet two inches in height (unlike the medium with brown eyes and a height of five feet two inches); (3) a bearded man three inches taller than the medium; (4) a woman. We read this of the disappearance of the woman;

"She remained about fifteen minutes, and on returning slowly to the cabinet, commenced gradually to dematerialise, so that by the time she reached the door she had diminished fully two feet in height, and correspondingly in size of form. Then she seemed to be slowly drawn by some unseen power into the cabinet, and, while standing within the door, in full view of all, gradually dematerialised to the size of a babe not more than eighteen inches in height. She reached out her little hand and arm, and waved it to and fro, then the door closed, and she was gone from our sight, to the regret of all.....The next to appear was a

gentleman about five feet ten inches in height, with dark hair and long dark beard, who was recognised by a gentleman present as his father-in-law, who passed away in August last."

The account ends up like this:

"The committee again overhauled the cabinet, examined every seal and every bolt and screw, and announced to the audience that everything about the cabinet was satisfactory. The medium then offered to be searched again, but the committee said it was not necessary. The hard sceptics admitted that this seance completely puzzled them, and overturned all theories of the medium personating different characters. At the request of some, the medium stood up inside of the cabinet, when it was found that his face merely reached a little above the opening. A gentleman present then drew up a paper and read it before the company, and requested them to sign it as an endorsement of Mr. Morris as a materialising medium. It was very readily signed. The following is a copy of the statement, with the signatures:

— Marion County, Indianapolis, Ind., May 10th, 1S76. We, the undersigned, attended a test seance for materialisation, given by James T. Morris on the evening of May 10th, 1876, and are fully satisfied that under the test conditions the faces which appeared at the aperture, and the forms which stepped from the cabinet, were not that of Mr. Morris; also that it was impossible for a confederate to be introduced into the cabinet without being detected. Dr. Wesley Clark, Mrs. Mary A. Potts, Jno. S. Wright, W. B. Potts, Mrs. E. Eveland, Dr. B. Atkinson, Mr. J. Eveland, J. F. Baker, J. W. Garrison, Aug. Siekert, J. Donnelley, Jacob Eldridge, M. B. Moore, Miss C. M. Sharpe, Mrs. J. Donnelley, Dr. W. H. Thomas, H. L. Austin, S. W. Peese, Thos. Jordan, A. M. White. B. Atkins."

There is no imaginable "secret trap door" trickery that can explain such a report. A skeptic's only resort here is to imagine a conspiracy to defraud among the named witnesses, or perhaps a lying writer who made up the names of all the witnesses.

On page 23 of the August 11, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account by J. T. Rhodes of a seance of Miss Fairlamb, attended on July 30 1876. We hear of the materialization of a figure called Cissy who grows from "a small white patch, about the size of a lady's handkerchief" to "a draped white figure, about two-and-a-half to three feet in height" who speaks in monosyllables.

On page 42 of the August 25, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account by Alfred Russel Wallace, co-founder of the theory of evolution by natural selection. It is one of very many

reports made in 1876 of inexplicable phenomena occurring around the medium Henry Slade. Slade was famous for seances in which witnesses would report writing inexplicably occurring on slates. Wallace gives this account of a meeting with Slade "in broad daylight" on August 9, 1876, there being no one present but himself and Slade:

"Writing came upon the upper part of the slate, when I myself held it pressed close up to the under-side of the table, both Dr. Slade's hands being upon the table in contact with my other hand. The writing was audible while in progress. This one phenomenon is absolutely conclusive. It admits of no explanation or imitation by conjuring."

Wallace reports additional paranormal phenomena occurring. On page 67 of the September 8, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we hear a more dramatic account of a session with Henry Slade, one written by Louisa Andrews:

"Several of the stances which I attended daring my late stay with Dr. Slade in New York, were held during the day, the clear sunlight streaming in through two large windows. Under these conditions, no one being present but the medium and myself, a double slate placed upon the top of the table was filled inside with writing. This slate was not touched by the medium, whose hands were clasping mine while the communication was being written. ***Chairs several feet from us were overthrown and lifted again, being, at my request, replaced as they had stood before, and sometimes held for several seconds suspended in the air.*** *Hands were felt and seen,...At one of these light seances a copy of Webster's unabridged dictionary, which lay upon a desk some distance off, was brought and fell upon the table, striking the hand of the medium and bruising it severely. On another occasion a large walking-stick, which had been standing against the wall at a distance from where we sat, came towards the table and danced about on the floor, at my right hand and opposite the medium, as if it were alive....During my last visit to Dr. Slade I had only one sitting for materialization,..The medium used no cabinet or curtain, but simply turned the gas partially down in the room in which we had been sitting the greater part of the day.* ***The forms gathered like a rapidly forming cloud, becoming gradually more dense, and taking shape before our eyes. They were extremely ethereal, so much so that objects were sometimes visible through them.****"*

On page 84 to 88 of the September 22, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have a long article by scientist William Barrett. Barrett describes witnessing people put under hypnosis who

seemed to have powers of telepathy and clairvoyance that blossomed in such a state. On page 87 Barrett becomes the latest of innumerable distinguished witnesses testifying to the reality of mysterious raps. He states this:

"About twelve months ago I was told that the daughter of a gentleman of good position in society, a child not quite ten years old, was troubled with knockings, for which no cause could be assigned. These sounds came on whenever the child was in a passive condition, and apparently displayed some intelligence, as they would keep time to a tune, or by rapping at certain letters, would spell out words. As the family were living in my neighbourhood, I made their acquaintance, and obtained permission to examine these mysterious knockings. I found that, in the full, glare of sunlight, when every precaution to prevent deception had been taken, still these raps would occur in different parts of the room, entirely out of reach of the child, whose hands and feet I was watching closely. ***A dozen times have I tested the phenomena in every way that the ingenuity of sceptical friends could suggest, and the result was that I could come to no other conclusion but that the sounds were real objective raps, displaying intelligence, and yet certainly not produced by any visible cause.*** *I have often had the sounds occurring on a small table, above and below the surface of which my hands were placed, and have felt the jarring of the taps on that part of the table enclosed between my hands. I have taken sceptical friends to witness these phenomena, and their testimony agrees with mine. It must be borne in mind that the conditions of the experiment are singularly unfavourable either for fraud or hallucination. To avoid the possibility of the former I have held the hands and feet of the child, and still obtained the knockings ; they have occurred on the lawn, on an umbrella, far removed from the possibility of deception by servants."*

On page 104 of the September 29, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have a letter by a Professor Lankester describing a meeting he had with the previously mentioned Henry Slade. Lankester states a theory of some trickery going on by Slade, one he fails to back up by any good evidence. On the next page we read a quote by anatomist C. Carter-Blake, stating this about Lankester's theory:

"If Dr. Slade plays tricks, his modus operandi is something very different from that which Professor Lankester would suggest. The observers who have visited him, including some of the cleverest minds in science, have failed to detect any fraud. Professor Lankester has found out simply nothing."

Similarly, on page 106 Alfred Russel Wallace (a biologist more accomplished than Lankester) disputes Lankester's claims:

"As I have now shown that Professor Lankester commenced his letter with an erroneous statement of fact, and a ' more than questionable ' statement of opinion, it is not to be wondered at that I find the remainder of his communication equally unsatisfactory. His account of what happened during his visit to Dr. Slade is so completely unlike what happened during mv own visit, as well as the recorded experiences of Serjeant Cox, Mr. Carter Blake, and many others, that I can only look upon it as a striking example of Dr. Carpenter's theory of preconceived ideas. Professor Lankester went with the firm conviction that all he was going to see would be imposture, and he believes he saw imposture accordingly. The 'fumbling,' the 'manoeuvres,' the 'considerable interval of time ' between cleaning the slate and holding it under the table, and the writing occurring on the opposite side of the slate to that on which the piece of pencil was placed, were all absent when I witnessed the experiment ; while the fact that legible writing occurred on the clean slate when held entirely in my own hand while Dr. Slade's hands were both upon the table and held by my other hand, such writing being distinctly audible while in progress ; and the further fact that Dr. Slade's knees were always in sight, and that the slate was never rested upon them at all, render it quite impossible for me to accept the explanation of Professor Lankester and Dr. Donkin as applicable to any portion of the phenomena witnessed by me."

Based on his dubious speculations about what Slade was doing and not actual observations of Slade doing anything fraudulent, Lankester caused Slade to be arrested and put under trial for violating the Vagrancy Act prohibiting things such as fortune telling. Alfred Russel Wallace and other witnesses testified in the trial that they had observed inexplicable phenomenon when sitting with Henry Slade, and saw no sign of fraud. You can read Wallace's testimony on page 161 of the document here. He testified to have seen what appeared to be paranormal writing on a slate, occurring in three different meetings he had with Slade. We have this testimony by Wallace in response to questions:

*"From beginning to end of your sitting was there anything indicative of imposture ?—I could see nothing whatever indicative of imposture. Were there any raps or movements that attracted your attention ?— I heard the raps and felt the touches which have been described, but the most remarkable thing was that t**he flat table, when my hands and those of Dr. Slade were clasped together, rose up, and almost instantaneously turned completely over on to the top***

of my head and slid down my back. *(Laughter.) Was it possible that this could have been produced by Slade's feet or legs ?—I think not. It appeared to me to be absolutely impossible."*

So not only did Wallace testify in court to seeing inexplicable writing produced in the presence of Slade, but also mysterious raps and the inexplicable levitation of a table (something reported by very many reliable witnesses of the nineteenth century, usually when Slade was not present). The court also allowed to be introduced into evidence the written testimony of Edward W. Cox (sometimes referred to as Sergeant Cox because of some office he held). The testimony is from page 18 of the August 11, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*. Cox testified this about a meeting he had with Slade:

"Instantly upon taking our seats very loud rapping came upon the floor. This was followed by a succession of furious blows upon the table, jarring my hands as they were laying upon it. These blows were repeated at any part of the table desired, by merely touching that spot with the finger, while the blows, as forcible as if given with a sledge hammer, were being made. Dr. Slade's hands were on the table upon my hands, and his whole body to his feet was fully before my eyes. I am certain that not a muscle moved. Then he took the slate after I had carefully inspected it, to be assured that no writing was upon it, and placing there a piece of slate pencil, the size of a small grain of wheat, he pressed the slate tightly below but against the slab of the table. Presently I heard the sound as of writing on a slate. The slate was removed, and on it a zigzag line was drawn from end to end. At this moment the chair that I had described as standing by the table was lifted up to a level with the table, held in that, position for several seconds, and then dropped to the floor. ***While the chair was so suspended in the air****, I carefully noted Dr. Slade. It was far beyond his reach. But his hands were under my hands, and his feet were fully in view near my own on the side of the table opposite to that on which the chair had risen."*

We have here not merely a report of mysterious slate writing, but also a report of dramatic inexplicable raps and also a report of a dramatic levitation of a chair. On and on Edward Cox's account goes, with him reporting many other inexplicable phenomena such as the appearance of mysterious hands that touch and grab and shake Cox. Cox's report casts no suspicion on Slade.

In the same edition on page 165 we have this written testimony addressed to Slade, testimony by attorney Clarke Irvine:

"I went to see you one afternoon at your house in New York. My name was never given to you ; I went from here almost direct, and was a perfect stranger in New York—never was there before; no one in your room but our two selves, and the sun shone into the window. As soon as I entered your room it seemed to me that invisible hands manipulated my person; my hands were seized by invisible hands. You did not offer to hold the little slate; I alone held it, you sitting off quite a distance. The slate, which I cleaned, was written upon both when I held it in my hand and when I held it under against the table top. ***My own name was written on the slate, and names of friends deceased twenty or twenty-five years were subscribed. I will swear you did not know the names, for no name was given to you by me—not even my own****. You tried to hold an accordion, which was violently wrested from you, to your apparent alarm; I took hold of it and held it tightly in one hand, with the keys turned toward me. The force pulled violently and pushed, and the keys raised and fell to the tune of ' Home, sweet home.' I could not have started the tune had my life been the forfeit.* ***I silently requested (mentally as it is called) that 'Hail, Columbia,' be played, and it was played.*** *Also a dinner bell was rung in mid air, while whirled about by a power to me unseen."*

Despite so many witnesses testifying in writing to have seen a wide variety of extremely dramatic paranormal phenomena in the presence of Henry Slade, with some of this testimony being introduced into court, we learn on page 162 of the November 3, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist* that Slade was found guilty in the court case, and sentenced to three months of hard labor on a charge of violating a Vagrancy Act prohibiting fortune-telling and similar activity. On the same page we read the judge's ruling, which makes it clear that he paid no attention to all the testimony that was providing indicating that authentic paranormal phenomena had been produced near Slade, but that he only paid attention to the speculations of Lankester. According to the document here, Slade was "released on a law quibble," which makes it sound like the case was eventually dismissed on a technicality. The page here says that " the conviction was afterwards quashed on appeal to the Middlesex Sessions, for a formal error in the conviction."

Skeptics mentioning Slade typically claim inaccurately that he was convicted of fraud. He was merely convicted of the much lesser charge of vagrancy, and that charge was later overruled and thrown out, as the two previous quotes show. In the Psi Encyclopedia we read this about the trial:

"Finally, Slade's trial is typically reported as a case in which Slade was convicted of fraud. But as a matter of fact, the

testimony presented against Slade at the trial was weak in the extreme, and the judge based his verdict largely on the intuition that Slade's phenomena could not possibly have been genuine because they conflicted with established natural laws."

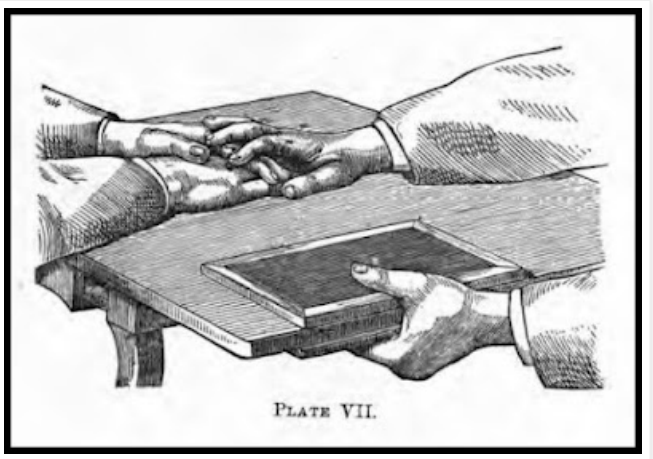
In the coming years the astronomy professor Johann Carl Friedrich Zöllner published an account of a test he did with Slade on May 8, 1877, one in which Zöllner reported a paranormal-seeming result that apparently could not possibly have been produced by fraud. On page 165 of his book *Transcendental Physics*, we read this:

"I obtained one of the most remarkable confirmations of this apparent suspension of the law of impenetrability of matter in a sitting on the 9th May, 1878, from eleven to a quarter-past eleven in the morning. Immediately after I had sat down with Slade at the card-table, I conversed with him at first on the power of his invisible intelligent beings, by means of which material bodies could be apparently penetrated with as much facility as if they were permeable. Slade shared my amazement, assuring me that never until now had such an abundance of this sort of phenomena been observed in his presence. Immediately after this remark he took up with his left hand two slates of equal size from among the slates which lay on the table at his left, and which had been bought and cleaned by myself. He handed me these two slates, and desired me to press the one upon the upper surface, the other against the under surface of the table, with my left hand, so that the thumb of my left hand pressed the upper, my other four fingers the under slate, against the flat of the table, as may be seen from the woodcut, Plate VII. Beneath the upper slate on the table, a splinter of slate-pencil had first been laid, so that it was thus completely covered by the upper slate. Slade then placed both his hands on the middle of the table, about a foot from the two slates, and requested me to cover his hands with my right hand. Scarcely was this done when I distinctly heard writing on one of the slates which were pressed firmly by me against the table. After the conclusion of the writing was signified, as usual, by three ticks quickly in succession, I took the slates apart, and of course expected that the one which had been above the table would be that written on, since on the table still lay the bit of pencil in the same place in which I had laid it a minute before. How great was my astonishment to find the under slate written on, on the side that had been turned to the table. Just as if the bit of pencil had written through the three-quarter inch of oak table, or as if the latter had, for the invisible writer, not been there at all. Upon the slate was the following message in English : —

"We shall not do much for you this morning, — we wish to replenish your strength for this evening; you will require to be

very passive, or we shall not be able to accomplish our work."

Below is the Plate VII referred to in the text above:



Faced with this testimony of the paranormal and much other testimony of the paranormal in Zöllner's book, a book by an accomplished scientist, skeptics resorted to the worst type of gaslighting, by claiming that Zöllner had lost his mind. But the book shows no sign of any such mental decline, but instead reads exactly like the work of a calm and careful observer.

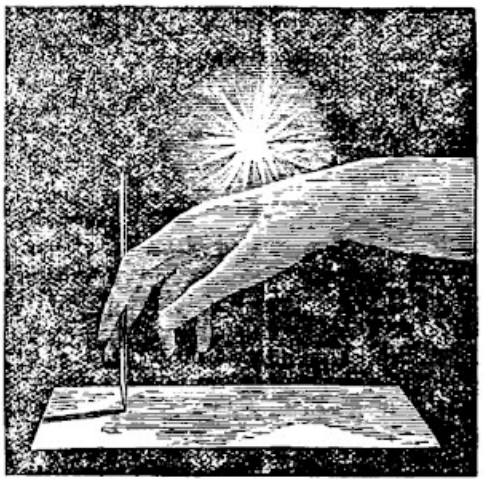
On page 126 of the October 13, 1876 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account by Henry D. Jencken. He describes a seance occurring on September 6, 1876 "at 51, Holland-street, Kensington, the house of Mr. S. C. Hall, the well-known Editor of the Art Journal." Several witnesses are named, including "Mr. and Mrs. Hall,
Mr. and Mrs. Mayo, Dr. Nethercliff of the Chelsea infirmary," Jencken and his wife. We are told of the appearance of an apparition:

"After a short pause, the door of the room in which we were sitting was gently opened, and a form was distinctly seen in the semi-light, as it streamed into the darkened room, from the hall lamp. The apparition—for I cannot describe it otherwise—appeared to be semi-transparent. I could all but see objects through it, and yet the outline was complete. To make sure that no optical delusion was carrying us away, questions as to who saw the figure were put all round, and answered affirmatively, save in the case of two members present who were seated with their backs to the door."

We are told of the appearance of a spirit hand, which raised a pencil and wrote briefly:

"A luminous, small, beautifully-shaped hand then descended from the side at which I was sitting, that is to say, at, the opposite side to Mrs. Jeneken. The hand seized a pencil which was lying on the table and wrote the letters ' E. W. E.' . The power of holding the pencil then evidently failed, The pencil, which had been held between the forefinger and third finger, dropped on the table, and the hand raised itself high, over head, and disappeared. After a short pause it reappeared, descended, touched the table, took hold of the pencil, and wrote the words ' God bless y—.' At the letter y the strength again appeared to give way, the pencil dropped, the hand rose quickly, and was gone."

Jencken provided a sketch of what he saw, and stated five others saw it. His sketch is below. He stated, "The luminosity around the wrist was singularly beautiful."



Many people in the nineteenth century made claims similar to the one above. For example, there had occurred in the January, 1874 edition of the Quarterly Journal of Science the publication of the paper "NOTES OF AN ENQUIRY INTO THE PHENOMENA CALLED SPIRITUAL, DURING THE YEARS 1870-73" by the leading physicist William Crookes, inventor of the Crookes tube that was the technological ancestor of the television set, and the co-discoverer of the element thallium. On this page, Crookes describes seeing a writing "spirit hand" similar to that reported by Jencken above. Crookes states, "A luminous hand came down from the upper part of the room, and after hovering near me for a few seconds, took the pencil from my hand, rapidly wrote on a sheet of paper, threw the pencil down, and then rose up over our heads, gradually fading into darkness."

The Jencken account quoted above meets high standards of evidence, as it is a first-hand account, it was published within a month after the reported sighting, and several witnesses are listed. The account is only one of many cases in which more than one witness reported seeing the same apparition. For many other cases, see my posts below:

When Two or More See the Same Apparition
When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 Cases
When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
More Apparitions Seen by Multiple Observers
Many an Apparition Is Seen by More Than One
Still More Apparitions Seen by Multiple Observers
When an Apparition Is Seen by Not Just One

The 1878 book *Psychography* by the respected scholar William Stainton Moses (writing under a pen name) documents numerous cases of witnesses reporting mysterious writing occurring in the presence of Henry Slade, with the accounts often describing observation conditions seeming to allow no possibility of fraud, or events (such as furniture levitations) seemingly incapable of being faked. On page 123 of a later (1882) edition we have an interesting list of distinguished people who reported seeing paranormal phenomena. We get this list (with an asterisk indicating someone no longer living when the list was compiled):

"*TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.*

*Science. — The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President E.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E. ; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin ; Dr. Lockhart Robertson ; *Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; Dr. William Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh ; *Dr. Ashburner, *Mr. Rutter, *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., etc. etc.*

** Professor F. Zollner, of Leipzig, author of 'Transcendental Physics,' etc.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig ; Professor W. E. Weber, of Gbttingen ; Professor Hoffman, of Wiirzburg ; Professor Perty, of Berne ; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg ; *Professors*

Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A. ; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau ; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, etc., etc.

*Literature. — The Earl of Dunraven ; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey ; Captain R. Burton ; Professor Cassal, LL.D. ; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; * Archbishop Whately; *Dr. Robert Chambers, F.R.S.E.; * William M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior ; *George Thompson ; *Wm. Howitt ; *Serjeant Cox ; *Mrs. Browning, etc., etc.*

*Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton ; Professor Alexander Wilder ; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex Judges of the U.S. Courts ; Victor Hugo ; Baron and Baroness von Vay ; *W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; *Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; *Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; *Epes Sargent; *Baron du Potet; *Count A. de Gasparin ; *Baron L. de Guldenstubbe, etc., etc.*

*Social Position. — H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg ; H.M.S.H. the Prince of Solms; H.S.H. Prince Albrecht of Solms ; *H.S.H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia ; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste ; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France....etc., etc".*

Postscript: An 1876 newspaper article notes the death of Daniel Dunglas Home. Below is a quote from the article (I'll correct the misspelling of Home's middle name):

"The death of Daniel Dunglas Home, as reported by cable dispatch from Paris, recently, terminates the career of the most famous Spiritualist and medium of modern times. The New York World affects to doubt his departure from this life, as if only the half of what has been told of Mr. Home is true. To suppose him dead merely because he happened to leave his corpse would be as absurd as to suppose so because he happened to leave his great-coat or his umbrella behind him.

He was born in Scotland, and came to this country when a mere child. He made his first conspicuous successes in Springfield and in Boston between the years 1851 and 1853. In this city he was hailed as a prophet by numbers of highly-educated persons, but. finally in 1855 he went to Europe. In London he was warmly welcomed by several coteries of the aristocracy, and he made a very strong impression upon the mind of Queen Victoria herself. The Duchess of Sutherland was one of his most open proselytes

and believers. In Paris be was made for a time 'the rage' by the undisguised interest which the Emperor Napoleon took in him and in his alleged miracles. He was frequently summoned to the Tuileries, and he gradually acquired a very considerable influence with the Emperor.

He married a Russian lady of noble birth in 1856. She died in 1862, and Mr. Home married a Russian princess. He was a particular favorite at the court of the Czar, and claimed in private to have converted the Czar to spiritualism. ***The many strange tales of spiritual phenomena contain nothing to rival the demonstrations of Mr. Home. Besides the ordinary phenomena of rapping, table tipping, writing and playing upon musical instruments, they include in his case visions seen by the medium, appearances of hands, arms and spirit forms seen by other persons, 'levitation' or the preternatural uplifting of the medium, elongation and shortening of his body by several inches, and his handling of fire and heated objects without hurt. It has been again and again affirmed of Mr. Home by witnesses of unimpeached character that they have seen him plunge his hands with impunity into a blazing coal fire, seat himself upon heavy mahogany dinner-tables and rise with them several feet into the air, and after floating horizontally head foremost out of the window at a height of many yards from the ground, sail tranquilly around a castle tower and come in again unharmed at the other side."***

Posted by Mark Mahin at 6:00 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, dematerialization, hypnotic trance, materialization, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, slate writing, trance phenomena

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Monday, February 5, 2024

"Previous Earthly Intelligence" UFO Theory Worsens the Explanatory Difficulties

Philosopher Bernardo Kastrup early this year wrote a long article entitled "UAPs and Non-Human Intelligence: What is the most reasonable scenario?" Contrary to the typical claim that UFOs are from some other planet, Kastrup argues for the idea that UFOs come from some intelligent life that previously evolved on Earth. There is a good alternative to the "metal spaceships from other planets" idea of UFOs, but that alternative is not the implausible theory Kastrup suggests.

Kastrup starts by citing some recent reports about UFOs that seem hard-to-explain. He quotes some 2023 evidence that is mostly not first-class observational evidence. He mentions some blurry videos released by the Pentagon, and some testimony before the US Congress by pilot David Fravor, pilot Ryan Graves and intelligence analyst David Grusch. For reasons I discuss at length in my post here, the testimony of the July hearing before the US Congress was not very compelling as evidence because it was mainly second-hand stuff. Grusch claimed that he has heard people say sensational things about captured UFOs. Similarly, Fravor's testimony was mostly second-hand testimony of what others supposedly saw, not first-hand testimony of what he saw first-hand (although he did give one "juicy" description of a first-hand sighting of the so-called "tic tac" UFO). Graves presented no clear first-hand testimony, although he made some ambiguous "we" references that may or may not have been about what he personally saw. In his three paragraphs discussing the testimony of Fravor, Graves and Grusch, Kastrup sounds too impressed by the mostly second-hand congressional testimony of Fravor, the not-clearly first-hand testimony of Graves, and the entirely second-hand testimony of Grusch.

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Someone following best practices in analyzing claims of the paranormal will tend to act differently, by paying the closest attention to whether an account is first-hand and whether it was written or committed to video very soon after the observations. Accounts in which people wrote down what they saw (or recited what they saw) soon after they saw it and publicly published their account are examples of first-class observational evidence. Some account in which someone says he heard something from someone else (who he does not mention) at some unspecified time is an example of second-class or third-class evidence. In the early part of his article, Kastrup writes as if he is not looking for the hallmarks of first-class observational evidence, and acts like he is very impressed by some second-class or third-class evidence.

We then hear from Kastrup this very dubious claim: "Recently retired US Army Colonel Karl E. Nell—currently an aerospace executive—along with Christopher Mellon, who spent nearly twenty years in the US Intelligence Community and served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Intelligence, have lent credibility to the claim that there are active UAP crash-retrieval and reverse-engineering programmes." Within this quote he links to a Debrief.com article by Leslie Kean in which we actually hear nothing of substance by Karl E. Nell backing up claims that there are "active UAP crash-retrieval and reverse-engineering programmes." The Kean article merely quotes Nell as saying that he think Grusch's claim about such things is correct. Kastrup's claim that Nell has "lent credibility" to Grusch's claim about such things is not correct, based on the link Kastrup has given. It sounds like what may be a mere case of wild rumors spreading around that both Nell and Grusch believe in. In the same Kean article Mellon says nothing very substantial, just more claims to have heard interesting stuff from other people. Some of the reasons why Grusch's claims have yet been well-supported are discussed here.

After citing a video which may or may not show a metallic orb moving around mysteriously, Kastrup makes this claim: "I submit to you that the following tentative premises are justifiable: firstly, there is an engineered technology in our skies and oceans that is not human." Nothing that Kastrup has discussed in his previous paragraphs justifies the claim that we have discovered examples of "engineered technology" that is not human. Very many reports have been made of strange things in the sky, but no one has shown that they are produced by "an engineered technology," nor has anyone proven that UFOs or UAPs are of non-human origin.

Shortly thereafter, Kastrup continues further in his "nuts-and-bolts" line of thinking, saying, "if there is non-human

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technology in our skies and oceans, then there must be Non-Human Intelligences (NHIs) active on our planet, engineering and controlling the UAPs." No, mysterious things appearing in the sky do not have to be the result of engineering and technology. When such things seem to act purposefully, we may be entitled to presume that there is some kind of agency or power behind such things. But we are not entitled to presume that there is engineering and technology involved. Humans accomplish impressive things by engineering and technology, but some non-human power could have different ways of accomplishing things.

Consider the supposedly metallic orb that Kastrup mentions. We have no reason to presume that inside such a thing is some fancy technology or electronics causing it to move around in such a way. A sufficiently advanced power (divine, extra-dimensional, extra-terrestrial or angelic) might have the power to move around in the sky rocks or spheres of solid metal. The words "technology" and "engineering" are presumptuous and too-specific when talking about the cloudy realm of mysterious things seen in the sky. It's much better to use more general terms such as "agency," "power" or "purpose."

Kastrup then discusses some work by UFO researcher Jacques Vallee discussing how UFO observations go back very far in history, and discussing how there often seems to be a psychic or psychological aspect of such sightings or encounters. In my post here I discuss the high number of cases in which UFO encounters seem to have a spiritual or paranormal character. Kastrup seems to fail to realize that such a discussion undermines his very claim that UFO/UAP observations involve an encounter with a "technology" or "engineering." Ignoring what he discussed in his paragraphs mentioning Vallee, Kastrup goes back to his "nuts and bolts" thinking, saying this:

"One clearly discernible class of observations, which I shall henceforth refer to as 'nuts-and-bolts' UAPs, entails physical craft that can not only consistently be seen, filmed, and tracked by radar, but also—if we are to believe Mr. Grusch's informants and other sources in a position to plausibly know—stored in hangars for decades, drilled into, analysed under a scanning electron microscope, etc. The bodies of their occupants can also —again, if we are to believe the sources—be kept in freezers and harvested for biochemical analysis. This means that the phenomenon in question has a physical aspect as consistent and stable as our own body and the car in our garage."

There is no robust evidence that anything stored in freezers or "analysed under a scanning electron microscope" has anything to do with UFO or UAP sightings. Rather than making a deep

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

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- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
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dive into the area of reports of the paranormal, such as you might do by citing very many original source materials, and rather than having the most careful search for first-class first-hand testimony of what was seen shortly before the testimony was given, Kastrup seems to be believing in not-well-established second-hand or third-hand accounts of weird things like alien bodies in freezers, accounts that could be mere wild rumors.

Kastrup then announces he will first ignore all the Jacques Vallee-style cases of UFO encounters that sound like encounters with spiritual beings, and he will pay attention to "nuts and bolts" type cases. Kastrup then leaps to the idea that UFOs and UAP come from some beings "terrestrial and ancient." He states this:

"*The idea is as follows: our planet has existed for about 4.5 billion years, with life on it for about 4 billion years. The genus Homo, to which we belong, has been around for less than 3 million of those 4 billion years; the blink of an eye in geological terms. And modern humans—Homo sapiens—for just 2 or 3 hundred thousand years. There is, thus, plenty of time and opportunity for other non-human species to have arisen on Earth, developed to a level of technology far beyond ours...My claim is that, based on what we know, such civilisations are not impossible or inconsistent with the geological record....Such a culture will be wary of the planet's surface, for the latter is a notoriously exposed and volatile region: it undergoes far more extreme temperature swings then, say, the deep oceans and underground caves; it is prone to severe weather that can ruin crops and flood entire cities; it is exposed to irradiation from solar storms and other cosmic events, which can ruin technology and life; it is extremely vulnerable to comet and asteroid impact, as the dinosaurs found out; etc. And since such a post-apocalyptic culture would have been reduced to relatively few members, their requirements for living space would also be relatively modest. Depending on the surviving level of their technology, they could have made a home for themselves underwater or underground."*

So now we have the core of Kastrup's UFO theory. He theorizes that UFOs come from some earthly civilization that arose long ago, and then for some reason started to live deep underground or at the bottom of the ocean. It's a very implausible idea that rather reminds me of the plot of the cheesy low-budget 1950's movie *Superman and the Mole Men,* about strange humanoid creatures living very deep underground.

We can imagine no reason why some non-human civilization arising long ago would have moved to live deep underground or at the bottom of the ocean. The speculative reasons Kastrup

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- 25 Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death
- Why the Origin of Language Is Inexplicable Under Orthodox Assumptions
- Visualizing a Top-Down Theory of Mind and Cosmic Connectivity
- Disastrous Blunders of the Experts
- Cosmic Coincidence Cover-up
- The Gigantic Missing Link of Biological Life
- Cosmic Fine-Tuning Visualized
- Why Machines Will Not Soon Be as Intelligent as Men
- Cloud Computing and the Concept of Non-local Consciousness
- There Is No Plausible Explanation For How Brains Can Store Very Long-Term Memory
- The Top 6 Problems With Using a Multiverse to Explain Cosmic Fitness
- "Vacuum Catastrophe" Should Be Called the Vacuum Miracle
- Why the Origin of Humans Is an Unsolved Mystery
- The Best Basis for Believing in an Afterlife Is Something Other Than Paranormal Phenomena
- Still More Dreams or Visions That Seemed to Foretell a Death
- The Evidence for Out-of-Body Experiences
- GOAL and Soul: Postulating What We Need to Explain Humans
- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

gives are not credible. Given that the surface of planet Earth is such a great source of beauty, fresh water and solar energy that helps drive agriculture, we cannot reasonably imagine some creatures arising millions of years ago saying something like, "Let's all move deep underground -- our culture will be safer from asteroids or solar flares." As for the idea of some civilization moving to the bottom of the ocean, Kastrup seems to have forgotten about the crushing pressure that exists in such an area.

Individual members of a society do what is best for them as individuals. It is extremely implausible to imagine that members of some civilization existing on the surface of Earth would have all abandoned the surface of Earth (with all its beauties and pleasures and advantages) to move underground or to the bottom of the ocean, because of some alleged better survivability of their culture over a vast time frame. And you never would make any culture more survivable by abandoning the surface of a planet. You might increase the survivability of a culture by having, say, 10% of it move underground. But there are so many disadvantages in moving underground or undersea that you would never increase the chance of a species surviving by having all of it flee the surface of a planet.

Besides the fact that it is so implausible to imagine some earlier race of civilized beings all moving underground or undersea as Kastrup postulates, there is another huge credibility problem with his theory. The problem is that if you imagine such a theory, it multiplies the explanatory difficulty of explaining the arising of intelligence on planet Earth. Scientists lack any credible explanation for the appearance of any mammal species on our planet. The claim that such appearances are explained by Darwin's ideas is one of the many groundless boasts of biologists. Darwin never advanced any credible theory of the origin of very complex and very well-organized biological organisms, and his idea that such things are explained by mere random variation and survival of the fittest was an explanation attempt as lightweight as a fortune-cookie slogan. The more we have learned about the stratospheric levels of hierarchically organized and information-rich fine-tuned functional complexity in creatures such as humans, the more untenable Darwin's explanations seem. Anatomically uninformative DNA, nonfunctional intermediates and useless early stages are some of the reasons why Darwin-style gradualism does not work as an explanation for bodies and biochemistry as fine-tuned and organized as humans have.

Darwinism never had any credible explanation for the origin of the intellectual riches of the human mind. This was pointed out very clearly by the co-founder of the theory of natural selection

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

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- Head Truth
- Orb Pro

(Alfred Russel Wallace) in his essay "The Limits of Natural Selection as Applied to Man." Among many other very good points, Wallace stated, "Natural Selection could only have endowed savage man with a brain a little superior to that of an ape, whereas he actually possesses one very little inferior to that of a philosopher." Darwinists attempted to bridge this huge explanatory shortfall by telling us huge glaring lies such as the glaring lie that "there is no fundamental difference between man and the higher mammals in their mental faculties," and the very big lie that DNA or the genes in it are a blueprint for building human bodies. (I see that today in the scientific journal *Nature* we finally have a headline saying, "It's time to admit that genes are not the blueprint for life," a point I have been emphatically making since 2018.)

The origin of humans is an unsolved mystery, for reasons discussed here and here. Now, what happens under Kastrup's theory of UAP/UFOs? The explanatory problem becomes twice as bad. Now instead of having one unsolved miracle of origination by which we got a human intelligent species, we have two unsolved miracles of origination by which we got two entirely different intelligent species arising at different times on the same planet.

Ironically, Kastrup suggests the possibility that you could help verify his theory if you were to discover some totally different type of biology not based on the genetic code that underlies all earthly biology. This amounts to an appeal to a second abiogenesis event. Scientists lack any credible explanation for how life could have originated from non-life, a hypothesized event they call abiogenesis. Imagining two separate abiogenesis events is making your explanatory difficulties far worse. For then you have to imagine two separate "miracles of organization" in which life arises from non-life. Such imagined events can be fairly called "miracles of organization" because of the very high organization and information richness of even the simplest one-celled life, which would require a very special arrangement of more than a million atoms, a special arrangement of about 100,000 amino acids.

We should not be making too-specific claims such as claims that UFOs are examples of technology and engineering. There is a good abstract way to consider UFOs and UAP: as possible manifestations of a mostly unknown and telescopically unobservable realm of reality that can be called the paraverse. The concept is explained in my post here. The idea of a paraverse largely overlaps with the concept of a parallel dimension that can interact with our reality.

External Sites

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Featured Post

Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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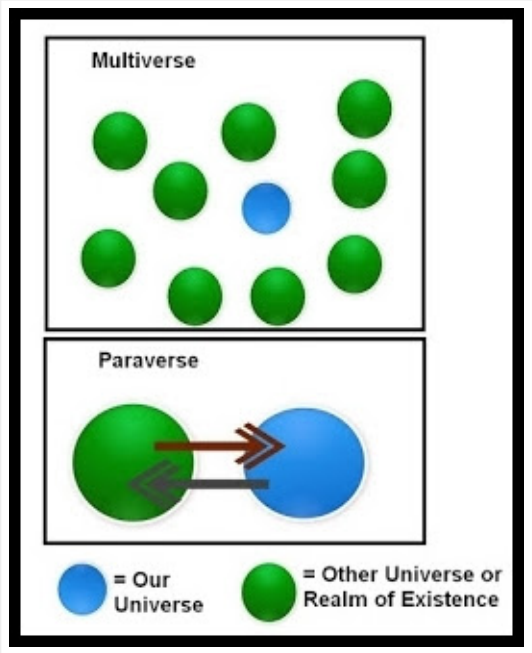
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

The two main differences between the multiverse concept and the paraverse concept are as follows:

1. The multiverse concept postulates many other universes, while the paraverse concept postulates only a single other realm of existence (without excluding the possibility of other such realms).
2. The multiverse idea typically postulates universes that are completely isolated from each other, without communication or interaction between any two of the universes; but conversely the paraverse concept says there may indeed be interaction or communication between our universe and some other realm of existence, with perhaps causes and effects sometimes flowing between the two.



In the diagram above, the arrows represent causal interactions.

Contrary to the claims of some physicists, the super-extravagant concept of a multiverse has no explanatory value in explaining the features of our universe, for reasons I discuss here and here. But the concept of a paraverse may have very much explanatory value. By imagining such a paraverse we might help explain many unexplained reports of paranormal phenomena. The inhabitants of a paraverse (which might include deceased souls, other-dimensional beings, angels, super-human beings of matter or energy, one or more divine beings, or countless other possibilities) might be able to influence matter or minds on Earth by virtue of mysterious powers they may have that we don't understand, an agency that may not involve "nuts and bolts" or technology or engineering.

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- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

It is a mistake to consider UFO or UAP observations in isolation. Such things seem to be merely one facet of a paranormal reality with endless facets. UFOs and UAP should be studied as part of a much larger undertaking of seriously studying all human reports of paranormal phenomena. The more wide and deep such a study is, the more plausible the idea of some type of paraverse will seem. Don't merely study two or three types of paranormal phenomena. Study 120+ types of reports of the paranormal and the anomalous, using some of the links in my long post here. And while you are doing such a study, pay the greatest attention to whether observational reports are first-hand eyewitness testimony, and also look for written accounts made by people describing what they saw or experienced, rather than people who may be merely passing on rumors of something that they heard from other people. Properly studying the paranormal requires prolonged in-depth scholarship, and burying your nose hundreds or thousands of times in the pages of old books, not merely some little dilettante dabbling done by surveying the latest spooky stories attracting social media attention.

Reports that sometimes are put in the category of UFO encounters or "alien abductions" are often reports bearing a strong resemblance to near-death experience accounts, as I discuss in my posts here and here. And nowadays reports of UFOs or UAP often involve reports of spherical orbs, reminding you of all of the mysterious orbs being photographed by people who don't describe them as UFOs (as I discuss here). So it makes no sense to put up some kind of "mechanistic filter" or "nuts and bolts" filter when trying to study UFOs and UAP, which may lead you to filter out and exclude the majority (or a sizable fraction) of the interrelated evidence.

Other than UFO or UAP sightings, we have no reason to suspect that there ever arose another intelligent species on our planet. But other than UFOs and UAP sightings, we have very many observational reports that should cause us to suspect the existence of some mysterious paraverse that can interact with our reality. Among such reports are the reports I discuss in my "Spookiest Years" series you can read here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, and here, and the reports I discuss in my very long post "120+ Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences" here.

- Black Holes (5)
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- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
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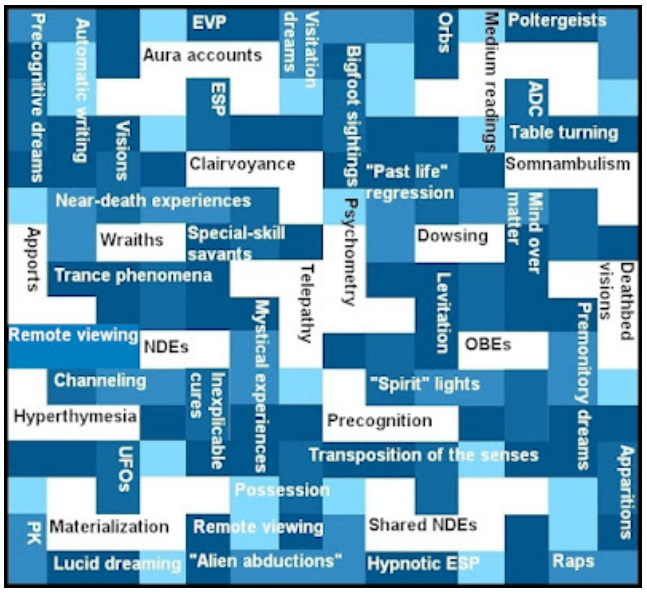
- cosmic destiny (2)



Types of paranormal or anomalous experiences

We need some idea under which most of these things can be explained. A good explanatory picture would be: every human being is a soul; souls have mysterious powers not restricted by brain limitations; and souls on Earth can interact mysteriously with souls in some other mysterious realm of existence, the result being various types of experiences that may seem unthinkable under materialist assumptions. Under such an idea, you can help to explain many of the items in the visual above; and such an idea may also be useful in lessening some of the life and mind origin problems that scientists have made much less progress on than they typically suppose. Mere material causes on Earth are insufficient to explain most of the phenomena listed above, and mere material causes on Earth are insufficient to explain human minds and insufficient to explain the vast organization of human bodies.

It is a great mistake to restrict study so that only things of one particular type are studied. An example of such unreasonable restriction can be found on a NASA page with a title of "UAP." We read this: "On June 9, 2022, NASA announced that the agency is commissioning a study team to examine unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAPs) – that is, observations of events in the sky that cannot be identified as aircraft or known natural phenomena – from a scientific perspective." What sense does it make to restrict the definition of "unidentified anomalous phenomena" to "events in the sky" when the majority of such phenomena are not observed in the sky, but on the ground level, such as in houses and buildings constructed by humans? None.

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
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- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
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- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

Kastrup's UFO speculations don't seem to fit in very well with his most widely read essays, in which he makes strange metaphysical claims, such as the claim that humans are "but dissociated alters of universal consciousness," a claim based on the word "alter" used in discussion of split personalities (Kastrup makes the claim at the end of the paper here). Calling his theory "analytical idealism," he seems to claim matter does not really exist, that "consciousness is an ontological primitive," and that there are merely different "alters" of this "ontological primitive." For reasons I explain in my post here, I don't think his metaphysics works, one reason being that it fails to explain why humans would have so many uniformities of experience such as always observing the sun during the day, always observing the ground underneath our feet, always observing the stars during the night, and always observing what looks like fine-tuned functional complexity when we examine microscopically the parts of the human body. Such uniformities of experience are explained in a different form of idealism (Georgy Berkeley's theistic idealism), but seem to be left not credibly explained under Kastrup's theory. As a general rule, I advise being suspicious of any thinkers who ever make claims beginning with "humans are just..." or "we are all but..." or "we are all merely...." Minds with the multifaceted and diverse powers of human minds should not be regarded as coming from any primitive source, which is kind of like thinking that computers arose up from the dirt, but even worse, since a human mind so far exceeds what a computer can do.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 6:00 AM No comments:

Labels: paranormal phenomena, UAP, UFOs

Sunday, January 28, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years"
series here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here & here I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1873. Let me pick up the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in the year 1874. My post will be a long one, because this year 1874 was perhaps the most notable one in the history of the paranormal.

At the beginning of 1874, there occurred in the January, 1874 edition of the Quarterly Journal of Science the publication of the paper "NOTES OF AN ENQUIRY INTO THE PHENOMENA CALLED SPIRITUAL, DURING THE YEARS 1870-73" by William Crookes, one of the greatest scientists of the nineteenth century, the main discover of the element thallium and the

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

inventor of the Crookes tube that was an early ancestor of every television set. The paper can be read here. Crookes states this:

"*My principal object will be to place on record a series of actual occurrences which have taken place in my own house, in the presence of trustworthy witnesses, and under as strict test conditions as I could devise. Every fact which I have observed is, moreover, corroborated by the records of independent observers at other times and places. It will be seen that the facts are of the most astounding character, and seem utterly irreconcilable with all known theories of modern science. ...Except where darkness has been a necessary condition, as with some of the phenomena of luminous appearances, and in a few other instances, everything recorded has taken place in the light. "*

Crookes then lists some classes of phenomena he was witnessed in good light in his own home:

Class I: "The Movement of Heavy Bodies with Contact, but without Mechanical Exertion." Crookes makes this remarkable statement about such a class of events: "These movements (and indeed I may say the same of every kind of phenomenon) are generally preceded by a peculiar cold air, sometimes amounting to a decided wind."

Class II: "***The Phenomena of Percussive and other Allied Sounds.***" Crookes notes the extremely varied nature of such spooky sounds, and that they are much more than just "raps." Crookes notes that such spooky sounds occurred with great volume and variety, coming from a great variety of objects and directions, particularly whenever the medium Kate Fox was around. See the quote here and the next several pages for identical testimony by a former US congressman, who testified to hearing such inexplicable noises in a huge variety of places, particularly whenever Kate Fox was around. See the quote here by another author who describes very loud sounds coming from all different directions in the presence of Kate Fox, and who describes the mysterious sounds giving information known only to the author. See the end of my post here for a discussion of how Canadian author Susanna Moodie reported a series of the most inexplicable and startling successes occurring when she tested the medium Kate Fox. Crookes says, "With a full knowledge of the numerous theories which have been started, chiefly in America, to explain these sounds, I have tested them in every way that I could devise, until there has been no escape from the conviction that they were true objective occurrences not produced by trickery or mechanical means." He notes that these mysterious sounds often seem to be able to answer questions: "By a pre-arranged code of signals, questions are

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

answered, and messages given with more or less accuracy." Most commonly this involved someone reciting the alphabet over and over, writing down which letters were followed by one of the mysterious noises.

Class III: ***"The Alteration of Weight of Bodies."*** Crookes refers to previously published work he did documenting this phenomenon. You can read about his very careful experiments documenting a paranormal alteration of weights in his 1871 work "Experimental Investigations of Psychic Force," which can be read here.

Class IV: "***Movements of Heavy Substances when at a Distance from the Medium***." Debunking the groundless legend that the physicist Michael Faraday showed that mysterious movements of tables could be explained by a theory of unconscious muscular "ideomotor force" produced by people touching the table, Crookes tells us this:

"The instances in which heavy bodies, such as tables, chairs, sofas, &c. have been moved, when the medium has not been touching them, are very numerous. I will briefly mention a few of the most striking. My own chair has been twisted partly round, whilst my feet were off the floor. A chair was seen by all present to move slowly up to the table from a far corner, when all were watching it; on another occasion an arm chair moved to where we were sitting, and then moved slowly back again (a distance of about three feet) at my request. On three successive evenings a small table moved slowly across the room, under conditions which I had specially pre-arranged, so as to answer any objection which might be raised to the evidence. I have had several repetitions of the experiment considered by the Committee of the Dialectical Society to be conclusive, viz., the movement of a heavy table in full light, the chairs turned with their backs to the table, about a foot off, and each person kneeling on his chair, with hands resting over the backs of the chair, but not touching the table."

Class V: ***"The Rising of Tables and Chairs off the Ground, without Contact with any Person."*** Further debunking the groundless legend that Faraday explained phenomena involving mysterious table movements, Crookes states this:

"On five separate occasions, a heavy dining-table rose between a few inches and 1.5 feet off the floor, under special circumstances, which rendered trickery impossible. On another occasion, a heavy table rose from the floor in full light, while I was holding the medium's hands and feet. On another occasion the table rose from the floor, not only when no person was

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

touching it, but under conditions which I had pre-arranged so as to assure unquestionable proof of the fact."

Class VI: ***"The Levitation of Human Beings."*** Crookes tells us this astonishing narrative:

"On one occasion I witnessed a chair, with a lady sitting on it, rise several inches from the ground. On another occasion, to avoid the suspicion of this being in some way performed by herself, the lady knelt on the chair in such manner that its four feet were visible to us. It then rose about three inches, remained suspended for about ten seconds, and then slowly descended. At another time two children, on separate occasions, rose from the floor with their chairs, in full daylight, under (to me) most satisfactory conditions ; for I was kneeling and keeping close watch upon the feet of the chair, and observing that no one might touch them. The most striking cases of levitation which I have witnessed have been with Mr. Home. On three separate occasions have I seen him raised completely from the floor of the room. Once sitting in an easy chair, once kneeling on his chair, and once standing up. On each occasion I had full opportunity of watching the occurrence as it was taking place."

You might dismiss such reports were it not that very many other witnesses reported seeing the same person (Daniel Dunglas Home) levitating. I have quoted the original versions of some of the earlier accounts of Home levitating in previous installments of this "Spookiest Years" series (here, here and here). Crookes states this:

"There are at least a hundred recorded instances of Mr. Home's rising from the ground, in the presence of as many separate persons, and I have heard from the lips of the three witnesses to the most striking occurrence of this kind—the Earl of Dunraven, Lord Lindsay, and Captain C. Wynne— their own most minute accounts of what took place. To reject the recorded evidence on this subject is to reject all human testimony whatever; for no fact in sacred or profane history is supported by a stronger array of proofs."

The extent to which such very important observations have been censored from mainstream textbooks and articles is something that sheds light on the enormous power of a prevailing ideological regime to control narratives, repressing reports that defy its claims.

Class VII: ***"Movement of Various Small Articles without Contact with any Person."*** Crookes suggests that he saw an accordion floating in the air while playing a tune, along with other wonders.

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

Class VIII: ***"Luminous Appearances."*** Among other things, Crookes states, "In the light, I have seen a luminous cloud hover over a heliotrope on a side table, break a sprig off, and carry the sprig to a lady; and on some occasions I have seen a similar luminous cloud visibly condense to the form of a hand and carry small objects about." See Speer's account below for a similar account of a spooky light floating about.

Class IX**: *"The Appearance of Hands, either Self-Luminous or Visible by Ordinary Light*."** Crookes discusses seeing spooky hands in regular light, saying this:

"A hand has repeatedly been seen by myself and others playing the keys of an accordion, both of the medium's hands being visible at the same time, and sometimes being held by those near him. The hands and fingers do not always appear to me to be solid and life-like. Sometimes, indeed, they present more the appearance of a nebulous cloud partly condensed into the form of a hand....I have retained one of these hands in my own, firmly resolved not to let it escape. There was no struggle or effort made to get loose, but it gradually seemed to resolve itself into vapour, and faded in that manner from my grasp."

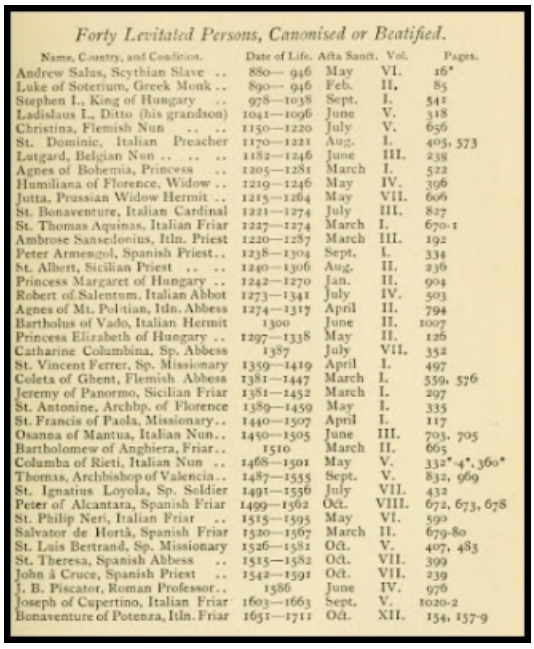
Class X**: *"Direct Writing."*** Crookes cites cases of inexplicable writing he saw. He says, "A luminous hand came down from the upper part of the room, and after hovering near me for a few seconds, took the pencil from my hand, rapidly wrote on a sheet of paper, threw the pencil down, and then rose up over our heads, gradually fading into darkness."

Class XI: ***"Phantom Forms and Faces."*** Crookes states this:

"In the dusk of the evening, during a séance with Mr. Home at my house, the curtains of a window about eight feet from Mr. Home were seen to move. A dark, shadowy, semitransparent form, like that of a man, was then seen by all present standing near the window, waving the curtain with his hand. As we looked, the form faded away and the curtains ceased to move. The following is a still more striking instance. As in the former case, Mr. Home was the medium. ***A phantom form came from a corner of the room, took an accordion in its hand, and then glided about the room playing the instrument. The form was visible to all present for many minutes,*** *Mr. Home also being seen at the same time. Coming rather close to a lady who was sitting apart from the rest of the company, she gave a slight cry, upon which it vanished."*

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

A long scholarly article in an 1875 edition of the *Quarterly Journal of Science* has a review of reported cases of levitation, and on one page it lists the following reports:



Forty Levitated Persons, Canonised or Beatified.

Name, Country, and Condition.	Date of Life.	Acta Sanct.	Vol.	Pages.
Andrew Salus, Scythian Slave ..	880— 946	May	VI.	16*
Luke of Soterium, Greek Monk ..	890— 946	Feb.	II.	85
Stephen I., King of Hungary ..	978—1038	Sept.	I.	541
Ladislaus I., Ditto (his grandson)	1041—1096	June	V.	318
Christina, Flemish Nun	1150—1220	July	V.	656
St. Dominic, Italian Preacher	1170—1221	Aug.	I.	405, 573
Lutgard, Belgian Nun	1182—1246	June	III.	238
Agnes of Bohemia, Princess ..	1205—1281	March	I.	522
Humiliana of Florence, Widow ..	1219—1246	May	IV.	396
Jutta, Prussian Widow Hermit ..	1215—1264	May	VII.	606
St. Bonaventure, Italian Cardinal	1221—1274	July	III.	827
St. Thomas Aquinas, Italian Friar	1227—1274	March	I.	670-1
Ambrose Sansedonius, Itln. Priest	1220—1287	March	III.	192
Peter Armengol, Spanish Priest..	1238—1304	Sept.	I.	334
St. Albert, Sicilian Priest	1240—1306	Aug.	II.	236
Princess Margaret of Hungary ..	1242—1270	Jan.	II.	904
Robert of Salentum, Italian Abbot	1273—1341	July	IV.	503
Agnes of Mt. Pol'tian, Itln. Abbess	1274—1317	April	II.	794
Bartholus of Vado, Italian Hermit	1300	June	II.	1007
Princess Elizabeth of Hungary ..	1297—1338	May	II.	126
Catharine Columbina, Sp. Abbess	1387	July	VII.	352
St. Vincent Ferrer, Sp. Missionary	1359—1419	April	I.	497
Coleta of Ghent, Flemish Abbess	1381—1447	March	I.	539, 576
Jeremy of Panormo, Sicilian Friar	1381—1452	March	I.	297
St. Antonine, Archbp. of Florence	1389—1459	May	I.	335
St. Francis of Paola, Missionary..	1440—1507	April	I.	117
Osanna of Mantua, Italian Nun..	1450—1505	June	III.	703, 705
Bartholomew of Anghiera, Friar..	1510	March	II.	665
Columba of Rieti, Italian Nun ..	1468—1501	May	V.	332*-4*, 360*
Thomas, Archbishop of Valencia..	1487—1555	Sept.	V.	832, 969
St. Ignatius Loyola, Sp. Soldier	1491—1556	July	VII.	432
Peter of Alcantara, Spanish Friar	1499—1562	Oct.	VIII.	672, 673, 678
St. Philip Neri, Italian Friar ..	1515—1595	May	VI.	590
Salvator de Horta, Spanish Friar	1520—1567	March	II.	679-80
St. Luis Bertrand, Sp. Missionary	1526—1581	Oct.	V.	407, 483
St. Theresa, Spanish Abbess ..	1515—1582	Oct.	VII.	399
John à Cruce, Spanish Priest ..	1542—1591	Oct.	VII.	239
J. B. Piscator, Roman Professor..	1586	June	IV.	976
Joseph of Cupertino, Italian Friar	1603—1663	Sept.	V.	1020-2
Bonaventure of Potenza, Itln. Friar	1651—1711	Oct.	XII.	154, 157-9

In a January 16, 1874 edition of *The Spiritualist*. page 33, Stanhope T. Speer, M.D. tells us the following account of events he recently observed (giving his address):

"I wish now to say, that on the 3rd of this month, at a seance held here, under very favourable atmospheric conditions ; a bright light, resembling a cylindrical luminous cake, about three-and-a-half by two inches in size, and surrounded by an oval-shaped luminous envelope, made its appearance, and remained visible, without fading, for upwards of forty minutes. It moved freely about the room in various directions, returning invariably and remaining upon the edge of the table, without (as in former instances) disappearing under the table, for the purpose of acquiring fresh brilliancy. It sometimes advanced, as

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

though walking, to the centre of the table ; rose in the air, placed itself, drapery and all, in the palm of my hand, held up to receive it. It then, at my request, soared upwards and struck the ceiling three times, at the same time striking the chandelier in its passage."

In the April 3, 1874 edition of *The Spiritualist* we have an article entitled "Spirit Forms" written by the leading 19th century scientist William Crookes. In the first few months of 1874 Crookes had been busy testing the famed medium Florence Cook, doing extensive tests in Crookes' home. The appearance of the "Katie King" phenomenon at that home was the third residence in which that phenomenon had been observed, and presumably ruled out any kind of "trap door" explanation (as Crookes could not have been unaware of such a thing in his own home). Crookes states some observations tending to rule out any possibility that the mysterious Katie King was the same person as Florence Cook:

"On March 12th, during a seance here, after Katie had been walking amongst us and talking for some time, she retreated behind the curtain which separated my laboratory, where the company was sitting, from my library, which did temporary duty as a cabinet. In a minute she came to the curtain and called me to her, saying, ' Come into the room and lift my medium's head up, she has slipped down.' Katie was then standing before me, clothed in her usual white robes and turban head-dress. I immediately walked into the library up to Miss Cook, Katie stepping aside to allow me pass. I found Miss Cook had slipped partially off the sofa, and her head was hanging in a very awkward position. I lifted her on to the sofa, and in so doing had satisfactory evidence, in spite of the darkness, that Miss Cook was not attired in the ' Katie' costume, but had on her ordinary black velvet dress, and was in a deep trance. Not more than three seconds elapsed between my seeing the white-robed Katie standing before me, and my raising Miss Cook on to the sofa from the position into which she had fallen.....I went cautiously into the room, it being dark, and felt about for Miss Cook. I found her crouching on the floor. Kneeling down, I let air enter the lamp, and by its light I saw the young lady, dressed in black velvet, as she had been in the early part of the evening, and to all appearance perfectly senseless. She did not move when I took her hand and held the light close to her face, but continued quietly breathing. Raising the lamp, I looked around and saw Katie standing close behind Miss Cook. She was robed in flowing white drapery, as we had seen her previously during the seance. Holding one of Miss Cook's hands in mine, and still kneeling, I passed the lamp up and down, so as to illuminate Katie's whole figure, and satisfy myself thoroughly

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

that I was really looking at the veritable Katie whom I had clasped in my arms a few minutes before, and not at the phantasm of a disordered brain. She did not speak, but moved her head and smiled in recognition. Three separate times did I carefully examine Miss Cook crouching before me, to be sure that the hand I held was that of a living woman, and three separate times did I turn the lamp to Katie and examine her with steadfast scrutiny, until I had no doubt whatever of her objective reality....Katie's height varies; in my house I have seen her six inches taller than Miss Cook. Last night, with bare feet and not ' tip-toeing,' she was four and a half inches taller than Miss Cook. Katie's neck was bare last night; the skin was perfectly smooth, both to touch and sight, whilst on Miss Cook's neck is a large blister, which under similar circumstances is distinctly visible, and rough to the touch. Katie's ears are unpierced, whilst Miss Cook habitually wears earrings. Katie's complexion is very fair, while that of Miss Cook is very dark. Katie's fingers are much longer than Miss Cook's, and her face is also larger."

The reported observations seem to definitively rule out the idea that the mysteriously appearing Katie King was the same person as Florence Cook. A skeptic's only resort here is to claim that Crookes was lying, but other witnesses made reports similar to the one above, as described here. In a June 5, 1874 publication we read a Crookes article entitled "The Last of 'Katie King.' " We read this statement by Crookes:

"*During the last six months Miss Cook has been a frequent visitor at my house, remaining sometimes a week at a time. She brings nothing with her but a little hand-bag, not locked; during the day she is constantly in the presence of Mrs. Crookes, myself, or some other member of my family, and, not sleeping by herself, there is absolutely no opportunity for any preparation even of a less elaborate character than would be required for enacting ' Katie King.'...The almost daily seances with which Miss Cook has lately favoured me have proved a severe tax upon her strength, and I wish to make the most public acknowledgment of the obligations I am under to her for her readiness to assist me in my experiments. Every test that I have proposed she has at once agreed to submit to with the utmost willingness ; she is open and straightforward in speech, and I have never seen anything approaching the slightest symptom of a wish to deceive. Indeed I do not believe she could carry on a deception if she were to try, and if she did she would certainly be found out very quickly, for such a line of action is altogether foreign to her nature. And to imagine that an innocent school girl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in*

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

that time should submit to any test which might be imposed on her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a seance, and should meet with even better success in my own house than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests,—to imagine, I say, the 'Katie King ' of the last three years to be the result of imposture, —does more violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms."

It should be remembered that the investigation by William Crookes of Florence Cook only started in very late 1873, and that we have a steady stream of very detailed published accounts of the "Katie King" materialization phenomenon dating from throughout 1872 and 1873 before his involvement, as documented in my earlier posts "Spookiest Years, Part 10: The Year 1872" and "Spookiest Years, Part 11: The Year 1873," including many accounts found in the 1872 and 1873 editions of the newspaper *The Spiritualist*. In a June 19, 1874 publication (page 298) we read this statement of S. C. Hall F.S.A:

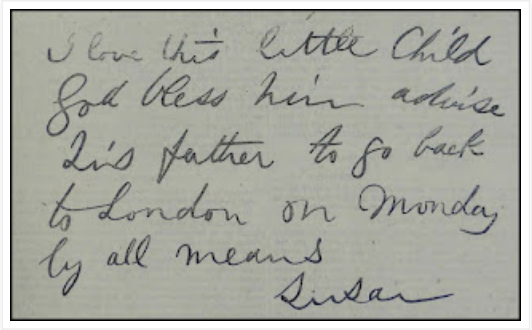
"I state that I did distinctly see the form said to be a ' materialised spirit' and the form of Florence Cook at the same time. The ' spirit ' was standing in the door-way, and Florence Cook was on the ground at a distance of about four feet from the ' spirit.'.

In the same edition we read that "we read that Florence Cook (daughter of the lawyer Henry Cook) was married to the lawyer Mr. Hackney."

In the April 18, 1874 edition of the Boston publication *Banner of Light* we read of mysterious phenomena in the house of the Eddy family in Vermont. We read first hand claims by a Mrs. A. N. Tupper to have seen materializations of various forms a few months earlier, one of which came out from behind a curtain, and then reportedly kind of sunk into the floor, in what seemed like an act of dematerialization.

One of the most famous mediums was Kate Fox, present at the Hydesville event of 1848 that seemed like the start of a huge wave of paranormal phenomena. On December 14, 1872 Kate was married to Henry D. Jencken, a lawyer. The May 8, 1874 edition of *The Medium and Daybreak* reports a remarkable claim regarding the child of this couple. The paper reports that on March 6, 1874 a pencil was mysteriously placed in the hand of the couple's five- month-old child, and that the child wrote the message shown below:

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)



The handwriting reads this: "I love this little child God bless him advise his father to go to London on Monday by all means -- Susan."

The newspaper article contains an attestation that the words above were written by the five-month-old child, signed by Kate Fox Jencken, a J. Wason and a nurse, dated March 6, 1874, the date of the reported wonder. When evaluating evidence for the paranormal, it is always a strong point when you have written testimony of named witnesses, dated with a date as soon as possible after the described event. A report like this might have no weight coming from the average witness, but so many people reported so many inexplicable things occurring around Kate Fox that the report of this wonder cannot be summarily dismissed.

There follows in the May 8, 1874 edition of *The Medium and Daybreak* a tale that most may think is too astonishing to believe. We are told that a halo of light was seen around the baby's head, and that streams of light were observed coming from the baby's eyes.

The writer N. B. Wolfe in an 1874 book reports observing some astonishing events at a seance:

"As soon as the room was darkened, 'the birds began to sing!' I never heard such singing — the many voices blending in perfect harmony, clear, loud, musical, and bewitching. It was a love-feast of celestial melody, which we, one and all, enjoyed to the full capacity of our appreciation. This charming concert continued about twenty minutes, unassisted by a human voice, until it suddenly ceased, and Mrs. Hollis seemed to be surrounded by a multitude of spirit-voices, speaking quick, confusedly, and in an undertone.... What next transpired, I will copy from my note-book : ' A spirit-voice began to chant a part of the Episcopal service, and then improvised a rhapsody that was indescribably sweet and beautiful. This musical manifestation continued about ten minutes, during which time we commented freely upon the quality of the voice. The singing had but scarcely ceased, when an indescribable sound,

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

resembling that which is made by a startled flock of birds, was beard, and coinstantial Mrs. Hollis, affrighted, was heard over our heads floating along the ceiling of the room!...This aerial flight continued only for a minute, during which time I ordered her to clap her hands against the ceiling, and mark the wall with the pencil she had in her hand ; all of which she did.' "

Nowadays no one would be too impressed by the auditory part, and might assume that it was trickery involving sounds played back on speakers. But the account was published in 1874, three years before the phonograph was invented, and more than a decade before the tape recorder was invented, when there was no such thing as audio playback.

In a letter published in the July 11, 1874 edition of the Boston newspaper *Banner of Light*, the author Robert Dale Owen (formerly a US congressman) gave this account:

"After the strictest scrutiny, with every facility promptly afforded me by the mediums, to detect imposition had it been attempted, I here avow my conviction that the phenomena are genuine; that I have again and again, on more than twenty occasions, seen, heard, touched forms to appearance human and material, and to sense tangible; that these forms have stepped up close to me; that I have held conversation with them, occasionally receiving advice, sometimes having my thoughts read and adverted to ; that I have received, written under my very eyes, by a luminous, detached hand, a communication of some length, purporting to come from an eminent English clergyman who died twenty years ago, the style and the signature serving further to attest its genuine character; finally, that I have seen the form which had spoken to me a minute or two before, fade away till it became a dim shadow, to re-appear, a few minutes later, in all its brightness. ..... I have seen, during a single sitting of an hour and a half, three separate forms completely materialized, walk out from the cabinet to within a foot or two of where I sat, have touched all three, have conversed with all three, and this has occurred in the light, without any one in the cabinet, both mediums sitting beside me. Again, I have witnessed on six different occasions the levitation (that is, floating in the air) of a materialized form."

Dale was the author of the long and very readable 1868 book "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World," which can be read here. In the July 17, 1874 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we read reports by named witnesses of recently observed seances in the United States, reports from Memphis and Indiana claiming materialization phenomena like those reported in the seances of Florence Cook. A ritual is followed of a medium placed in a small wooden box called a cabinet, and then tied up with

elaborate knots. The witnesses report various mysterious figures coming out of such cabinets, of various ages, genders and sizes.

In the August 28, 1874 edition of *The Spiritualist,* we have a letter dated August 1, 1874 by former US congressman Robert Dale Owen, one making some very remarkable claims that may seem utterly unbelievable were it not for all the testimony quoted earlier in this post. Owen describes seeing in Philadelphia beginning about July 5, 1874 a phenomenon of a mysterious figure arising not from a small wooden cabinet containing a medium, but such a cabinet starting out with no one at all. He states this:

"Substantially, indeed, it was but a reproduction and confirmation of the marvellous phenomena, so patiently sought out and so accurately described by Mr. Crookes. But ***we obtained these results without any human being in the cabinet,*** *and without any entrancement of the mediums....Under the circumstances, we had, I think, every phenomenon which Mr. Crookes has recorded, saving this, that ' Katie' did not remain with us in the parlour, in full form, more than five minutes at any one time without re-entering the cabinet: but she was in the habit of coming out as often as five or six times in one evening, if we had a small, select circle, and two or three times when twenty or more persons were present. I have conversed with ' Katie' at the aperture more than seventy or eighty times, frequently in regard to the manner of conducting the sittings. On several of these occasions she read and replied to my thoughts...I have seen ' Katie' issue from the cabinet more than a hundred times in full form...I was in the habit, after each sitting, of carefully examining the cabinet; but neither cross, nor ring, nor bracelet, nor locket, nor chain was ever to be found ; minute search, with a light, did not even reveal a roseleaf. With such or similar phenomena you arc doubtless familiar; but* ***I have seen ' Katie,' on seven or eight different occasions, suspended, in full form, about two feet from the ground for ten or fifteen seconds.*** *It was within the cabinet, but in full view; and she moved her arms and feet gently, as a swimmer, upright in the water, might do.* ***I have seen her, on five several evenings, disappear and reappear before my eyes, and not more than eight or nine feet distant.*** *On one occasion, when I had given her a Calla lily,* ***she gradually vanished, holding it in her hand, and fading out from the head down;*** *and the lily remained visible after the hand which held it was gone; the flower, however, finally disappearing also. When she reappeared, the lily came back also, at first as a bright spot only, which gradually expanded*

into the flower. Then ' Katie' stepped out from the cabinet, waving to us, with all her wonted grace, her adieu ere she finally retired for the evening. ***Thus I have seen a material object, as well as a spirit, vanish and reappear.***"

Robert Dale Owen then tells us he saw two other figures inexplicably emerge from this empty cabinet: an "Indian girl, taller than 'Katie,' with dark face and rich Indian costume, who advanced to us, allowed us to touch her hands and her dress, and gave her name as 'Sauntee' and afterwards a sailor boy." A similar account is given by a different named witness (Thomas Brown) is given on page 228 of the November 6, 1874 edition of *The Spiritualist,* describing events on October 26, 1874, and naming several other witnesses.

On page 10 of the January 1, 1875 edition of *The Spiritualist,* we have a report by seven named witnesses of a meeting on December 23, 1874. The report states the witnesses saw this gradual materialization of a human form, also witnessing its gradual dematerialization:

"Presently in full view of all the sitters, at the entrance to the doorway of the screen, a something white appeared on the floor, though no mortal hand was seen to place it there; slowly and very gradually this white object grew in size and height till it reached about the height of three feet from the floor, from which it developed more rapidly till the full form of a man, clad in white, about five feet eight inches high appeared before us. We asked if it was 'Benny,' (one of the medium's guides) ; he nodded in the affirmative, and waved his arms above his head. After two or three minor manifestations, he was requested to take a pencil and mark on the wall as high as he could reach, which having done, he retired to the door of the screen, and standing there in full view of all, gradually diminished in size and height till what remained appeared like a white pocket-handkerchief on the carpet, which itself shortly faded away."

The best of these accounts (and the best of other accounts in this series) are accounts in which a particular named witness tells what he saw on some particular day at some exact place, and who else witnessed the occurrence; and we know exactly how long the gap is between the written report and the day of observation (usually only a small gap), with the publication of the report occurring very soon after the reported observation date. When we have all such things, it helps to build confidence in the reliability of the observation.

We may compare the best of these accounts to the reports published in modern scientific papers. Today's scientific papers

typically have quite a few different authors, and are written in a passive voice. We are typically *not* told that a particular person saw a particular thing on a particular day. Instead almost invariably a passive voice is used, so we have no idea of which person witnessed the event. We don't even know whether any of the listed authors witnessed the described event, or whether the reports of the event come from unnamed lab assistants or student helpers. We get "passive voice" statements such as this: "Mice were given an injection of the agent, and were tested using the Morris Water Maze test." Also, we are almost never given dates telling when the observations occurred, and are almost never told exactly where the observations occurred. We typically don't know how long a gap occurred between the observation day and the day the account was written. For all of these reasons, a typical experimental scientific paper published today is less reliable as evidence than the best reports I have cited in this "Spookiest Years" series. It is strange that people regard these scientific papers written today as much better evidence, even though they fall short on most of the characteristics we hope to find in good evidence.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition seen by multiple witnesses, levitation, life after death, materialization, mediums, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism

Tuesday, January 16, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 11: The Year 1873

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here and here) I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1872. In this installment I will look at accounts of spooky events occurring during the year 1873.

In a letter to *The Times* of London in January of 1873, quoted on pages 67 to 71 of the February 1873 magazine here, Alfred Russel Wallace (co-founder of the theory of evolution) stated the following about his investigation of paranormal phenomena:

"I began the investigation about eight years ago, and I esteem it a fortunate thing that at that time the more marvellous phenomena were far less common and less accessible than they are now, because I was led to experiment largely at my own house, and among friends whom I could trust, and was able to establish to my own satisfaction, by means of a great variety of tests, the occurrence of sounds and movements not traceable to any known or conceivable physical cause....Although I have

heard a great many accusations of imposture, I have never detected it myself; and, although a large proportion of the more extraordinary phenomena are such, that, if impostures, they could only be performed by means of ingenious apparatus or machinery— none has ever been discovered. I consider it no exaggeration to say, that the main facts are now as well established and as easily verifiable as any of the more exceptionable phenomena of nature which are not yet reduced to law. They have a most important bearing on the interpretation of history, which is full of narratives of similar facts, and on the nature of life and intellect, on which physical science throws a very feeble and uncertain light; and it is my firm and deliberate belief that every branch of philosophy must suffer till they are honestly and seriously investigated, and dealt with as constituting an essential portion of the phenomena of human nature."

Around this time there were many claims of people having photos done in which unexplained figures seemed to appear, who the people being photographed said they recognized as some deceased person they had known. Such cases were often cited as examples of "spirit photography." The average person should ignore all such reports unless they are first-hand testimony. The account below signed by a doctor and his secretary appeared on page 292 in the July 4, 1873 edition of the publication *Medium and Daybreak*:

"While in London I visited the photograph rooms of F. A. Hudson 177 Palmer Terrace, Holloway Road, being a perfect stranger to that gentleman. I was accompanied by my secretary, Mr. T. R. Poulterer. We sat for pictures. The first spirit that came was Mr. Poulterer's mother ; the second, unknown ; the third, apparently only clouds: but an account of which will be given hereafter, as a prophecy has been made in regard to this picture ; the fourth was distinctly recognised by both Mr. Poulterer and myself as the spirit of my former partner, E L. Hamilton, M.D. So distinct was the picture, that we recognised it from the negative. We would recommend Mr. Hudson to those investigating the spiritual philosophy."

J. Wm. Van Namee MD

T. R. Poulterer, Sec."

The report above is hard-to-explain through any hypothesis of fraud, as the photographer apparently did not know the two men. Rodger I. Anderson's *Psychics, Sensitives and Somnambules* notes that Hudson "was never caught in any overt act of deception," although the authenticity of his photos was widely debated by those believing in other paranormal

phenomena. A book on Hudson and his photos (one I have not read) is the one here.

In the previous post in this series ("Spookiest Years: The Year 1872") I had quoted quite a few newspaper articles from 1872 that had documented the evolution of the phenomena at seances of Florence Cook. The phenomenon reported in 1872 would typically consist of something like this: (1) Florence Cook being tied up in a small wooden cabinet with a circular hole at its front, often with the knots being sealed; (2) the appearance of phantom faces at the cabinet hole, often a "Katie King" face looking different in several aspects from that of Florence; (3) the later opening of the cabinet door to reveal Florence in an entranced state, with the knots still undisturbed and the seals undisturbed. The reports seemed to show a progression of the phenomenon, with witnesses reporting things such as hands of the mysterious Katie King phantom protruding from the cabinet hole.

In the March 1, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist*, page 119, we have an account by G. R. Tapp describing a seance of Florence Cook. Tapp reports the figure of Katie King coming out of the cabinet, and walking around and talking. He says, "The resemblance of her features to those of Miss Cook (which has so often formed the subject of discussion and comment) was not now perceptible." This is one of the earliest reports of a full-body appearance of the Katie King phantom, one that would be repeated many times in the coming months by many other witnesses. A similar account appeared in the March 15, 1873 edition of the same publication, by a B. W. Pycock describing on page 134 in great detail a seance of March 3, 1873. On page 133 of the same edition we have a similar account by J. C. Luxmore describing the same seance of March 3, 1873. He states this:

"When Katie appeared in full length outside the cabinet, her feet and legs were bare, whereas, of course, Miss Cook had on boots and stockings. Again, that Katie was clothed in a long and rather full white robe, such as Miss Cook could not possibly have concealed about her person, especially as her figure happens to be very small. I carefully examined every portion of the cabinet, and nothing of the sort was in it."

In the same edition we have seven named witnesses (all giving their names and addresses) stating that they saw a full-sized phantom of Katie King during a seance with Florence Cook in which she was tied up in a small cabinet, with the knots sealed:

"This evening, March 12th, 1873, we, the undersigned, were present at a seance at Mr. Cook's. In the first part of the sitting, the full form calling herself Katie came out of the cabinet, draped

in white, while Miss Cook's hands were securely bound together with tape and sealed....At the close of each sitting the tapes and seals on Miss Cook's hands were intact, and were then cut off and taken away by two of the visitors."

We have here testimony meeting very high standards of evidence. The account has been published on March 15, 1873, and describes events witnessed only three days earlier, on March 12. The account is dated on the same day the witnesses saw the events, meaning the report is of something just observed. In addition, there are seven named witnesses. The testimony typically given in today's scientific papers (typically passive voice accounts of observations made by one or more unspecified witnesses claiming to have seen something at an unspecified date) usually are inferior from the standpoint of meeting highest standards of witness testimony.

In the April 1, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist*, on page 152, we have this account:

"Spirit Forms—Last Sunday week, at a seance at Mr. Henry Cook's, at Hackney, Mrs. Bassett and Miss Cook were the mediums, and they sat in the cabinet for spirit forms. The observers present were Dr. J. E. Purdon, Sandown, Isle of Wight; Mr. Bassett, Thornham-Grove, Stratford; Mr. G. II. Tapp, Queen Margaret's-grove, Mildmay-Park ; and Mr. and Mrs. Blyton, 74, Navarino-road, Dalston. Miss Cook's spirit guide 'Katie,' came out of the cabinet at full length, robed in white, in a good light. On giving her subdued light she was able to walk round the room, and to touch each sitter in turn. Mrs. Bassett told the company that Miss Cook had been entranced all the time, with her head lying on her (Mrs. Bassett's) lap; that Katie appeared suddenly, and frequently, entered and left the cabinet; finally, she came in again, stood by Miss Cook, and slowly faded away."

In the May 15, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist,* page 200, we have a long account of attempts to photograph the mysterious phantom Katie King. We have an assertion signed by five witnesses (Amelia Corner, Caroline Corner, J. C. Luxmore, G. R. Tapp and William H. Harrison) stating on May 7, 1873 that what they describe as "the spirit 'Katie King' " was successfully photographed, and they she walked around and talked at length. We are given an artwork and told that this is a copy of one of the photos taken. The artwork is below (the rather poor visual quality apparently being due to a photo being taken of the old newspaper):

PORTRAIT OF THE SPIRIT "KATIE KING."

Copied from a Photograph taken by the Magnesium Light.

A matching artwork (also identified as a copy of a photograph) appears at the front of Epes Sargent's 1876 book *The Proof Palpable of Immortality,* which has many pages dealing with the Florence Cook seances discussed above, and similar sessions of the next year. The artwork is below:

PORTRAIT OF THE SPIRIT "KATIE KING."

Copied from a Photograph taken by the Magnesium Light.

The portrait above from the May 15, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist* (along with a smaller woodcut in the same edition) seem to be the first images of Katie King to appear in print. In the June 1, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist*, page 217, we are told this:

"Last Wednesday evening, at a seance at Mr. Henry Cook's, Haekney, four more positive photographs on glass were taken by the magnesium light, of the materialised spirit form of Katie King. One of the Daily Telegraph correspondents, the author of the Unorthodox London letters, bound the hands of Miss Cook (the medium) together with tape, sealed the knot between the wrists with wax, stamped by his signet ring, then he fastened her to the floor inside the cabinet with thc long end of the tape from the wrists, and brought the same end of the tape out of the cabinet, and tied it to a chair. The tapes and seals were perfect at the close of the seance. The witnesses were also Dr. J. M. Gully, of Malvern ; Miss Katherine Poyntz (whose vocal abilities are so well known) ; the two Misses Withall, of Brixton ; Mr. II. Withall, Mr. G. 11, Tapp, and Mr. Harrison."

In the November 1, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist*, page 381, we read more about recent seances with Florence Cook, involving the appearance of the mysterious phantom Katie King.

"At a seance held October 7th, Mr. C. Blackburn and Miss Blackburn of Manchester, also Dr. Gully, were present. Miss Blackburn and another lady thoroughly searched Miss Cook (who requested that they should do so) in a bedroom, after which they accompanied her to the cabinet which had been thoroughly searched just previously. Her hands were then secured with tape, by which also she was fastened to the floor in the cabinet. All the knots were sealed, with signet rings. The spirit came out of the cabinet with bare feet, robed from head to foot in white, as usual, in a good light. She talked for about an hour as usual, entering and leaving the cabinet occasionally; once she walked about a yard from the cabinet, towards the centre of the room."

We then read this, indicating that very many named witnesses saw effects like those described above:

"Last Tuesday there was a seance at Mr. Luxmoore's house, 16, Gloucester-square, Hyde-park. Among the guests were Mr. and Mrs. Mankiewiez, Pembridge-gardens, Bayswater ; Mr. and Mrs. Cook, of Hackney ; Mr. H. M. Dunphy, Barrister-at-law, Essex-court, Temple ; M. Alexandre Aksakof, of St. Petersburgh ; Mrs. Whyte, 33, Richmond-road, Bayswater ; Mrs. Corner, Miss Corner, and Mr. T. Corner, of Connaught-square, Haekney ; Mr. Stanhope Templeman Speer, M.D., of Alexandra-road, St. John's-wood ; Mr. G. R. Tapp, 18, Queen Margaret's-grove, Mildmay-park ; Mr. J. M. Gully, M.D., Streatham ; and Mr. W. H. Harrison, Hernehill. The darkened back drawing-room was used as a cabinet, a curtain being

suspended between the two rooms. Miss Cook was bound and sealed as usual, a seal belonging to Dr. Speer being used ; the medium was fastened to the floor, with sealed tape, just behind the curtain. The seance proceeded as usual, Katie in one instance turning round to show her back to the company...The tapes and seals were intact at the close of each seance, and the tapes were stretched before use. "

In the November 14, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist*, page 396, William Oxley (in a statement dated November 4, 1873) describes a similar seance ("at the house of Mr. Cook") involving Florence Cook on October 31, 1873. We read this:

"*Miss Cook, the medium, was securely fastened by tapes going round each wrist, and knots sealed with my signet; the tape round the waist ' ditto,' and brought through a strong staple in the floor of the cabinet, thence conveyed across a side table, so that any movement by the medium would have been instantly detected. A lamp was burning the whole evening, with the exception of once, when it was accidentally turned out by Mr. Tapp. The light was sufficient for all present to see each other and every thing that was in the room. That Miss Cook and Katie King are not the same person was evident to my mind from the following facts :—Katie appeared full three or four inches taller than Miss Cook ; the arms, hands, and feet, which were all bare, were also longer and stouter in proportion. Katie, I particularly noticed, had hair of a lightish brown tint, and which projected beyond the encircling head-dress quite straight, and half-way down the back, while Miss Cook's hair is very dark and arranged in long profuse curls and ringlets. As I saw Katie two minutes before Miss Cook came out of the trance state, and was liberated by cutting the tapes, the seals on which were intact, I am sure any lady will bear me out in the assertion that it would not be possible in so short a period to change the hair from straight to ringlets or long curls. Katie came out of the cabinet into the midst of the circle at least six or seven times, and conversed with most of those who were present. On one occasion she went to the side-table, and taking up some paper in the presence of all, wrote two messages, one of which she presented to me, and which is now in my possession; this was done in a good light and witnessed by all who were present.*

On one occasion, while Katie was in the centre of the room, we heard a slight moan inside the cabinet, when immediately she returned, saying it was necessary to keep her medium asleep. Mr. Luxmoore put his hands and arms inside the cabinet and adjusted the medium, who had slightly fallen on one side of her chair ; this done I was summoned by Katie to leave my seat and

go and examine the tapes. I did so, and felt the tapes inside the cabinet; these were all tight. I was astonished during this episode to find that Katie had vanished, for we could see inside the cabinet, while Mr. Luxmoore was adjusting the medium, but before I had time to resume my seat, Katie asked me if I had examined the tapes, and if I was satisfied. Of course my reply was in the affirmative."

In the December 1873 edition of *The Spiritual Magazine* on page 555 we have this account of a seance at the house of J. C. Luxmoore, Esq., 16, Gloucester Square, Hyde Park, on November 18th, 1873:

"The fourteen ladies and gentleman who formed a horseshoe circle in front of the cabinet could see each other the whole evening. A low chair was placed in the cabinet, upon which Miss Cook, the medium, was seated, and Mr. Luxmoore invited Mr. B., of Manchester, and myself to witness the tying and securing of Miss Cook. Her hands were first tied together with a piece of tape, the ends of which were sewn and sealed with wax, and then the tape was passed round her waist and tightly knotted and sewn and sealed again. The tape was then passed through a staple in the floor, leaving a slack of about a foot, and there knotted again, which restrained Miss Cook from standing up to her full height, and then the same piece of tape was brought into the room m which we were seated, nearly up to our feet, where it remained undisturbed to the last. In this way the most satisfactory proof was given that whoever the figure of Katey may be, it was not Miss Cook, who lay during the whole stance, as we had proved to us by the undisturbed line of tape, and by Mrs. Honywood being invited to enter the cabinet by the spirit the instant she, Katey disappeared; which Mrs. Honywood did, and there she saw Miss Florence Cook asleep, leaning over nearly to the floor,— the ties on her hands and waist sealed as they had been left at the commencement of the sitting, from which, as soon as she awoke, she was relieved by cutting them. Here we all saw within an instant or two, this young girl recovering from her trance, dressed in black, wearing stockings and spring boots, having just lost sight of Katey, the spirit, who was clothed in pure white garments, and whose feet were naked."

In accounts such as these we have quite a few characteristics of very good evidence. The accounts are extremely explicit, giving all relevant details. The accounts are firsthand accounts by named witnesses (giving their addresses also) in dated statements mentioning when the event was witnessed. In most cases we can see that the account was written on the same day

as the witnessed events or only a few days after the witnessed events, and that the account was published in a newspaper or magazine within a few days after the account was written. Accounts such as these have much higher value as evidence than accounts of people recalling something they saw months or years ago. The smaller the time interval between an account and when the event account occurred, the more reliable the evidence is. People are often sentenced to long jail terms on the basis of much weaker evidence, such as someone recalling in a court something he saw months ago or years ago. Another strong aspect of good evidence here is that quite a few different witnesses on different dates and in different homes report seeing the same thing: (1) Florence Cook being tied up in a "cabinet" (usually a small wooden cabinet, but sometimes a sealed-off area of a room), with seals placed on the knots; (2) the appearance of a mysterious Katie King phantom who comes out of the cabinet, having an appearance different from Florence; (3) the disappearance of this Katie King followed by an opening of the cabinet, with Florence still tied up in the sealed knots. These three things are reported occurring in not just one home, but different homes.

In the December 12, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have a description of what happened at a December 9, 1873 seance involving Florence Cook. We read this:

"This evening at Miss Cook's seance, during the appearance of what purported to be the spirit ' Katie,' a man, named Volckman, rose up, grasped her round the waist with both arms, and tried to throw her down with his feet. Mr. Tapp and Mr. Comer seized the man who thus broke the conditions which we were all admitted on the understanding we would keep. 'Katie' instantly extricated herself from his clutches, and aided by Mr. Luxmoore, was in a moment back in the cabinet. After a delay of about five minutes, during which Katie gave earnest instructions to the sitters, the cabinet was opened and Miss Cook found in black dress, and boots, with the tape tightly round her waist as at the beginning of the seance, the knot sealed as at first with the signet-ring of the Earl of Caithness, and sewn underneath the seal with thread, as it had been sewn before the seance by Mr. Luxmoore."

In the next edition (December 26, 1873) William Volckman gives his account of the incident:

"In reply I have to state, that having for forty minutes carefully observed and scrutinised the face, features, gestures, size, style, and peculiarities of utterance of the so-called spirit, the

conviction irresistibly forced itself upon me that no ghost, but the medium, Miss Florence Cook, herself, was before the circle. I perceived also an occasional tip-toeing by the young lady as if to alter her stature, and was much struck by the utter puerility of her remarks throughout the seance. I am confirmed in my conviction, as above stated, by the facts that the struggling ghost had to be forcibly extricated from my grasp, and afterwards to be 'aided' into her cabinet by a Justice of the Peace."

Although sometimes quoted by the very rare skeptics who discuss the case of Florence Cook, the incident provides nothing to discredit the Katie King phenomenon, other than one man's negative impression. If you read the long 1873 accounts of the Katie King appearances, partially quoted above and fully readable in many of the 1873 editions of *The Spiritualist*, you will not hear claims of Katie King being some immaterial translucent ghost who could not be grasped, but instead accounts of a mysteriously appearing solid form. For example, in the June 1, 1873 quote above, Katie King is referred to as a "materialized spirit form" not some immaterial ghost. In reports of later tests by a doctor and Sir William Crookes, we are told the same mysteriously appearing "Katie King" would have her pulse measured and her skin temperature felt. So some possible brief clutching of this Katie King by a skeptic does nothing to discredit the phenomenon. In the December 26, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist* we are told by a witness that Volkman's clutching attempt was a matter of no more than about six seconds. Often the witnesses would report Katie King looking much like Florence Cook, and often the witnesses would report substantial differences in appearance.

On page 534 of the December 1873 edition of *The Spiritual Magazine* we have this account of mysterious appearances during a seance occurring in October 1873.

"Seance at 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, October 23. Present: Professor Aksakoff, Mr. Serjeant Cox, Mr. Volkman, Mr. and Miss Shorter, Miss Ingram, Miss Houghton, Mrs. Fisher, and Mr. and Mrs. Guppy. We sat for about half-an-hour, the door locked, all hands joined, and light extinguished; during which several objects were thrown upon the table. On lighting the gas, these were found to consist of a stone, a knitting needle, a potato, a turnip, a carrot, a Spanish onion, thirteen dahlias, six apples, three pears, four walnuts, two almonds, twelve mussel-plums, a lemon, three gold fishes, a water-mussel, a lobster, two eels, and a knife and fork. The dahlias were wet with the rain which had just fallen ; the fishes

were all alive; the gold fishes and the mussel were brought from an aquarium in an adjoining room ; the rest of the things were not in the house or grounds. A stone had been asked for by Miss Houghton, and the one brought was wet and soiled, as if picked up from the street. One of the eels was placed around the neck of Mrs. Guppy, and the other was drawn over the face of Mrs. Fisher, and the screaming which followed led to the gas being lit, and brought the seance to an end. Mr. Volkman had asked for a vegetable marrow, and after the seance, was over, and we had risen from our chairs, a large marrow fell at our feet in view of all present, and in full gaslight. Just before the seance began, at the suggestion of Mrs. Guppy, the room was carefully searched, so that it can be certified, from thorough examination of the room and its contents, that these things were not then in it."

The account has no named author, which subtracts a little from its value as evidence. The same edition lists a similar occurrence at a seance of October 28, 1873. On page 431 of the September 1873 edition of *The Spiritual Magazine* we have a similar account of dramatic mysterious appearances inside a seance room with locked window and doors, occurring on August 14, 1873, with the author (Margaret Fisher) reporting the appearance of " six cups and six saucers, six tea spoons, two knives, six tea plates, a jug of milk, loaf of bread uncut, basin with sugar, plate of butter garnished with parsley, a large twelve cup teapot with tea in it ready for infusion, two beautiful Madeira cakes, and a large dish containing several pounds weight of beautiful English hothouse grapes." On page 453 of the October 1873 edition of the *The Spiritual Magazine*, we have an account by Margaret Fisher of a recent 1873 seance. The report claims that "after seeing to the perfect security of doors and windows, we sat down to the table, extinguished the lights, and...on the large table we found seven pounds weight of plums, and six pounds' weight of fine grapes, and twelve pounds of pears, most tastefully garnished with leaves and flowers, and a dessert plate placed before each of our party." Margaret follows with a mention of the mysterious appearance of a horse, but the description is too vague to be worth quoting.

In an 1873 publication we have this interesting claim by Benjamin Coleman:

"*It will be recollected by those who have read my* American Notes*, that Miss Laura Edmonds, daughter of Judge Edmonds, told me that her spirit in natural form had more than once appeared to friends at a distance; and Miss Mapes, daughter of Professor Mapes, assured me that her friend, Miss Edmonds,*

had appeared to her, and delivered messages, though bodily they were living twenty miles apart."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: apports, materialization, mediums, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism, teleportation

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Friday, January 12, 2024

When "Spirit Writings" Show an Impressive Prowess (Part 2)

In Part 1 of this two-part series, I examined some cases of claimed "spirit writings" which seemed to show great skill beyond any we would expect from those that put the words down on paper. Perhaps the most astonishing case of possible "spirit writings" is the case of Patience Worth. In 1913 two women (Pearl Curran and Emily Grant Hutchings) sat at an Ouija board. The Ouija board soon spelt out messages claiming to be from someone named Patience Worth, such as this message:

"Many moons ago I lived. Again I come. Patience Worth my name."

There eventually followed over the years a huge quantity of very high quality writings that seemed to have arisen by paranormal means, including many poems and even novels such as the roughly 380-page novel Hope Trueblood and the roughly 600-page novel The Sorry Tale. They would only come when Pearl Curran was around. According to a book on the topic, Pearl was someone who "has a taste for literature, but is not a writer, and has never attempted to write anything more ambitious than a personal letter."

Some of the greatest poems of Patience Worth are to be found in the collection *Light from Beyond*. Here is an example, a very good free verse poem entitled "Ever the Pupil":

"Teach me. Teach me!
Let me never become so old
That my ears are not pits.

Teach me. Teach me!

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Let every man become my teacher.
Let every sorrow speak deeply.
Let every joy inscribe me.

Teach me. Teach me!
For if I stop listening,
I shall stop forever!

Yea, the writing of the ages
Speaks Eternity as ever
Listening, ever waiting.

Teach me. Teach me!
Let me ne'er forget that I am a child;
That tomorrow is a secret,
A joyful secret, not yet imparted;
That Yesterday was a plaything
Which I loved, but left
Upon a pathway within a shadow.

Teach me. Teach me—
That I am a little child!
Let me be forever learning,
Ne'er forever yearning!"

Another very good poem in the collection is the poem *The Typhoon,* which takes on a deeper inspirational significance when you consider that the Mariner mentioned in the poem symbolizes not just a sea captain, but anyone of us facing some difficulty which may seem frightening but we are capable of successfully handling.

"Why need ye fear, O Mariner?
Why need ye fear?
The winds sing no new song, and the waves
Have spoken their words since time—

With them thou art familiar.
Why need ye fear, O Mariner?
The craft is thine, and each cunning trick
Of steering lies within thy brawn.

The wheel turns slow, eh, Mariner?
And the waters heavy swell.
Yon, faint coming, like a veiled lady
Rising from the sea—the storm!

Why need ye fear?

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Baring thy breast to the gale,
Let the masts bend low and thy prow ride free!

What needst thou fear, O Mariner? -
Is the water black and yellow-lashed,
In venom tipped the waves; and the lightnings,
Like talons, grasp the waves and wring them dry,
And cast them back unto the sea!

What needst thou fear, O Mariner?
What needst thou fear?
The winds wail like shrieking mermaids
That disport some wanton land.

What needst thou fear, O Mariner,
Though they laxy their beauty o'er
- Thy very keel, and beckoning, tempt thy smile!
What needst thou fear, O Mariner?

For thou canst hear the flapping of the gulls
— And port is near!"

The last two lines sound a hopeful note, suggesting the Mariner facing a storm (who represents any one of us in a difficulty) will soon find some deliverance from his danger.

The poems of Patience Worth are overflowing with a rapturous love of nature and its wonders. Her poem "The Hastening Earth" is an example of her mastery when treating themes of nature and its wonders. Note the great coherence of the poem, in which every group of lines echoes the same theme of nature in motion:

"What is this urge, this hastening,
This lashing something which besets all creation?
I watch the moving clouds making their way
In haste across the summer sky,
Making away, away! To where, where?
I beheld a thrush burst forth from the hedgerow,
Carrolling, carrolling, letting free its song,
Making away, surely, surely. To where, where?
I saw the moon coming up over the somber eve,
Hastening, hastening through the fleecy clouds,
Urging them to make a free path for her tread;
Unto where, where?
I saw the sun press his golden lips
Upon the wood's flanks, and they
Flushed scarlet at his wooing.

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

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But he, hastened up, up, up!
Unto the zenith but for one precious moment,
Then hastened downward—unto where, where?
And the summer! I saw her bind
Poppies within her golden locks,
And veil her blue eyes with the lace of cloudlets.
I saw her laugh upon the fields,
But for a little season, and, leaving,
The fields were haunted things, while she
Hastened, hastened on—to where, where?
Oh, the Spring was fretful, yea, weeping;
But the moon, and the stars, and the sun,
Wooing her, caused her to smile
But for that rare hour, then wane,
Leaving her gentle footfall but in the echoes,
As she hastened on—to where, where?
Oh, I am consumed with the urge!
What is this thing which beckons then?
I, too, feel that mystic touch upon me,
And I gird the loins of my spirit,
And make me ready for this journey—
Unto where, where?"

The case of the writings of Chico Xavier are another case of alleged spirit writings of impressive prowess. Francisco Cândido ("Chico") Xavier was born in 1910 in Brazil. From his teens Xavier claimed to be writing down speech that was dictated to him by spirits. By 1932 he had accumulated enough material to make a book, and his book of poetry "Parnassus from Beyond the Tomb" became a best seller. Xavier went on to produce more than 400 books. This was astonishing partly because his formal education seemed to have ended at the age of 13. We read this in the Psi Encyclopedia article on Chico Xavier:

"Much of his writing was done at public sessions, several of which were filmed showing him at work, his left hand covering his eyes and his right hand filling sheet after sheet of paper at extraordinary speed. More writing was done during Chico's lunch break when he was working at his day job. Thus there was clearly no time for him to do any research, nor was there any local library where he could have done it. One of his early novels, set in Rome in the first century, contained such an abundance of details about Rome and its empire that a guide to the historical and geographical references in it ran to 157 pages and contained more than 450 entries. No plausible explanation of how Chico could have acquired such information by conventional methods has yet been given.

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Also unexplained was the steady stream of personal messages given to those attending his public meetings, many of whom came in the hope of receiving news from their deceased loved ones. Again and again he would give precise details of their death, usually a premature one, sometimes not only giving the names of members of their family but signing off with nicknames – one young man named Milton ended his message as he used to do when alive with '1000 Ton', the Portuguese word for one thousand being mil. A team of Spiritists from São Paulo managed to track down 45 recipients of such messages, and found that not only was every single statement attributed to the deceased communicators agreed to be accurate, but that much of the information they provided had never been made."

Chico reportedly gave away all of his royalties to charity. He was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1982, with a petition signed by two million Brazilians sent to the prize committee. The nomination documents described how over 100,000 had benefited from the donated royalties coming from Chico's books. Chico's funeral got more than 100,000 attendees or attempted attendees.

You can see some examples of Chico's work in the book "Poetry From Beyond the Grave," which can be read for free online using the link here. Below is an excerpt from one of the poems:

"Brethren, here I am again at your side!
I come from lucid, splendid spheres,
I have crossed gloomy roads
And starry, wondrous fissures,
Wielding the psalms of hope.

I could overcome abysses of gold and roses,
Fissures of dream and dark chasms,
Planets like vessels without pilots
On the oceans of Endless ether.

I have gazed the haunting Milky Ways,
Visions of eternal suns confused
Among fiery, distant stars;

I have seen prodigious stars firing
Harmonies of love and clarity,
And humanities among humanities
Populating the splendorous Universe...

I have rested on islands of repose,
In beautiful distant archipelagos,

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Inhabited, enchanted palaces,

In retreats of calm and peaceful love,
Where the soil is gold and snow,
Where the darkness and the night are only
Memories of obscure worlds!

Where the flowers of undying affection
Do not wither as on Earth.
There, on these lucid, holy orbs,
Love, and only love, nurtures and gives life...

Death corroborates our faith,
Our deepest hopes,
Braking the veil that covers from our sight
The eternal landscape of the Universe,

And death points to us the sky, the immensity,
Where the happy soul grows grander,
Leading other souls in mazes
To the light, to life and love!"

Later in the book is a good poem entitled "Death":

"Silent maiden of sorrow,
Death has opened for me radiant cathedrals
Where hover the vaporous shapes
Of the forgotten land of Beauty.

In a deluge of lilacs and roses,
Sons of light, of another Nature,
That shaped in space the subtlety

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Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

Of the incense of luminous ships!

Monk of merciful look, calm and distant,
Brings to Earth the shy humming
Of the mansion of wondering stars...

Sister of peace and serenity,
That opened my eyes to immortality,
To the hope of all my days!"

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: mediums, paranormal phenomena

Thursday, January 4, 2024

Spookiest Years, Part 10: The Year 1872

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1871. In this installment I will look at accounts of spooky events occurring during the year 1872.

The writer N. B. Wolfe wrote an 1874 book which reported observing some astonishing events at seances occurring in 1872. He reports requesting the construction of a shelf-less cabinet, to be placed in a room in his house. The cabinet had a diamond-shaped aperture or hole, an opening about 8 inches in width. A worker arranged for this, and a series of experiments began in which the medium Mrs. Mary J. Hollis was placed in the small cabinet, six feet high, five feet wide and two feet deep. Wolfe reports three strange hands protruding from the cabinet's door, two looking like a small child's hand. In a session shortly thereafter, Wolfe reports seeing what looked like a muscular arm of a man protruding from the cabinet. Not long after Wolfe claims to have seen this:

"As soon as the music started, Mrs. Hollis entered the cabinet; when, as the door was closed, hands were exhibited at the aperture. I should think there were as many as ten materialized, in as many minutes, some of which were projected into the room, but at least half the number retired after barely getting an exposure to light. They were single at first ; then two, three, and, finally, five hands were finely materialized at once, four of which belonged to children."

Two pages later Wolfe reports seeing the face of his mother:

" As I did this, I beheld my mother's face in the opening of the cabinet door.

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- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

' Why, mother,' I exclaimed, 'is it possible!'

I riveted my gaze upon her for twenty seconds, during which time she smiled, bowed, and pronounced my name. The curtain then swung between her face and me. All in the room saw and heard the same as I did. I was not more than two feet from the cabinet."

Wolfe says in the next pages that he had a somewhat larger cabinet built, and advertised in the paper for witnesses. On pages 324-325 he states that the following was seen by him and Mr. W. W. Ward, Mrs. Roseanna C. Ward, and George W. Scatts:

"It was only a few minutes after the door was closed, when a large, muscular hand presented itself at the aperture, which at first seemed shadowy, but gradually grew to be as substantial looking as one of flesh and blood. It remained a minute or more, and was then withdrawn. Very soon after, my mother's head and face, with all the details of her head-dress fairly delineated, appeared at the opening in the door, and remained two minutes. After bowing, she retired, and was followed soon after by the materialization of a head and face of a young woman that had not appeared before. Mrs. Ward instantly recognized the spirit as Anna Clemfort, and spoke to her. The reply and acknowledgements were made by bowing the head and rapping loudly on the inside of the cabinet. Mrs. Ward herself is a fine clairvoyant, and has often seen, while in her supersensuous condition, the spirit of Miss Clemfort, looking exactly as she presented herself at the aperture. As this spirit retired, another face and head of a beautiful woman appeared, and bowed to Mrs. Ward. It was one who had stood by her as bridesmaid many years before. Mrs. Ward called her by name ; in response to which, she smiled, bowed her head, and rapped, as the preceding spirit had. It was not long before the aperture was again filled by another head and face of a lady, evidently of the Society of Friends, for she wore a plain cap. The materialization was good for half a minute, during which time the spirit was recognized as Mrs. Rachel Fisher, by Mr. Skaats, to whose family, during her natural life, she was quite well known."

On pages 326 to 327 we read this:

"The next seance I shall notice was held in the evening of September 3d. It was attended by Mrs. Angeline Madison, Dr. A. J. Hazelwood, and Mr. G. W. Skaats, and two members of my family. In five minutes after Mrs. Hollis entered the cabinet, hands of various sizes began to appear at the aperture ; some were projected into the room, but most of them appeared at the opening only, inside the cabinet. This exhibition continued for a

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

quarter of an hour. Following this digital display, was the head and face of a sweet little girl, which was immediately recognized by Mrs. Madison as her own child. The materialization was very good, and continued for a minute. The mother's heart was surprised with joy. at meeting her darling again. Following closely was the beautiful face of another angel child, radiant with love-light and smiles. Mr. Skaats at once recognized her as his little daughter....Seemingly as a guardian to the little girls, the motherly face of Mrs. Rachel Fisher appeared almost as soon as the last one had retired. She was instantly recognized by Mrs. Madison and Mr. Skaats, to whom she bowed her head several times in token of satisfaction. As she passed from the light, the face of an old and well-known citizen appeared, which was at once recognized by Mrs. Madison, Mr. Skaats, and Dr. Hazelwood, as being Mr. R. A. Madison. He was better known to old citizens of Cincinnati as 'Squire Madison.' Mrs. Madison was his niece, Dr. Hazelwood his grandson, and Mr. Skaats his kinsman by marriage. The materialization was good, and the light sufficient to distinguish every feature of his face."

On page 329 Wolfe states that he had a surprise call from a newspaper reporter named F. B. Plimpton, who wanted to follow up on the reports Wolfe had made in a Cincinnati newspaper of some of the spooky events. Plimpton ended up publishing (apparently in 1872) a long account of what he had seen at the house of Wolfe and in the presence of Mrs. Hollis. Wolfe reproduces the long newspaper account on page 330 and the following pages. Plimpton reports finding no fraud, and at one point his account reads this:

"Again some time elapsed, and another face appeared, but so dim that we were only able to make out the outlines of a man's face. 'You must do better than that,' said I, ' if you want to be recognized.' Two other efforts were made, the last so successful that I involuntarily exclaimed, ' Potter! ' and instantly a roll of sharp knockings, while the face was still visible, sounded along the partition. When the face disappeared, the knocks were rapidly repeated with intense emphasis. The face was life-size, had the compact full forehead, the hair brushed away from it after the manner in which Mr. Potter wore it. The mixture of gray in the hair and chin-whiskers was visible. Dr. Wolfe did not recognize it till the name was mentioned. This manifestation lasted three minutes."

On pages 342 - 344 Wolfe reports a variety of recognized materializations occurring on September 12, in front of witnesses including Mr. Charles Graham, Mrs. Mary Graham, and their son Freddie. He reports a variety of phantom faces appearing and being recognized, including George Washington.

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

By page 352 Wolfe is reporting these phantom faces appearing in abundance: "Mary Plimpton had left the aperture but a few minutes, when the following spirits appeared, in the order of naming: M. D. Potter, James Buchanan, Stephen A. Douglas, Mrs. D. P. and son, Anna Hancock, Sarah Powers, Josephine Bonaparte, 'Caroline,' and George Washington." A student of history will recognize four of these names. On page 359 and the next few pages Wolfe quotes a long account from a Colonel Piatt who spent eight days (seven hours a day) investigating the phenomenon. Piatt ended by concluding, "I join heartily in the report which says that the medium is above all suspicion, and I can add my conviction that the intelligence with which we communicated was beyond, if not above, the experiences of material humanity."

On page 377 and the next ten pages Wolfe describes a long list of witnesses who saw phantom faces at the seances of Mrs. Mary J. Hollis, and often identified them as faces of deceased friends or deceased relatives. Must we regard all of these as actual appearances of such deceased people? No, there are other possibilities such as these:

(1) We can imagine a medium with extremely powerful powers of telepathy, including an ability to read minds of witnesses (discovering what their relatives looked like), and either a mind-over-matter ability to materialize faces or the appearance of faces, or an incredibly strong telepathic ability to kind of place images in people's minds of things they didn't see.

(2) We can imagine that all of the manifestations were produced by a single mysterious spiritual presence, with the power to change into different forms, and also read the minds of witnesses.

(3) We can imagine the whole thing just being a massive conspiracy, with Wolfe paying very many people to say that they saw things they never saw, perhaps for the sake of selling more copies of his book.

Unfortunately, such possibilities are of not much use to the materialist, who nowadays likes to charge many of the people he despises as "conspiracy theorists." The first two explanations would involve postulating mysterious psychic powers the materialist refuses to believe in. The third explanation would require that the materialist become a large example of a conspiracy theorist himself.

On pages 416 to 422 Wolfe produces a report by a Thomas Vickers who studied the phenomena for days, and ended up concluding that he saw phenomena he could not explain, and found no evidence of fraud.

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

In his 1874 book *The Proof Palpable of Immortality: Being an Account of the Materialization Phenomena of Spiritualism,* Epes Sargeant describes on page 50 a partial materialization of the soon-to-be famous Katie King at a seance of the medium Florence Cook on April 25, 1872. We read this:

"As the developments went on, Katie began to exhibit not only the whole of her bare face, but her hands and arms, in a strong light. In these early stages, Miss Cook was almost always awake during the manifestations ; but sometimes, when the weather was bad, or other conditions were unfavorable, Katie would entrance her, the purpose of which was simply to increase the power, and to prevent the mental activity of the medium from operating as an interference. After a time Katie never appeared without the medium being in a trance."

The May 15, 1872 edition of *The Spiritualist* includes a long account of seances with Florence Cook, one that includes an account by Florence herself. The September 15, 1872 edition of *The Spiritualist* gives us an account on page 70 by Thomas Blyton dated September 9, 1872, apparently describing observations on September 4, 1872. Blyton tells us that he personally tied up Florence Cook, in knots, pouring sealing wax upon the knots to make sure they were not disturbed. Florence was put in such a state tied up in a chair inside a wooden cabinet with a viewing hole. The cabinet is described like this:

"The cabinet is fitted into a recess in the wall, the dimensions being 7 ft. 6 ins. x 3 ft. 1 in. X 1 ft. 9 1/2 ins. ; it has two doors, 5 ft. 6 ins. high, which, when opened, expose the whole of the interior to view. Above the two doors is a panelling, in the centre of which is an opening one foot square. One of the doors is fitted with sliding bolts at the top and bottom, and the other with a lock and key, locking from the outside."

Blyton reports seeing and hearing the phantom face of Katie King, and says it appeared for 15 minutes at the opening of the cabinet. Blyton reports touching the face, feeling cold skin. At the end of the seance, according to Blyton, the cabinet was opened, and Florence was found still tied in knots, with the wax seals still on the knots. We read this:

"I placed sealing-wax over the three principal knots, affixing a seal in each case, in such a manner as to render it impossible to loosen the knots at the wrists or on the chair, without breaking the seals. Having once more fastened the doors and taken my seat, we again sang a few verses and were delighted to hear Katie King joining in, to which she referred by asking us whether we did not think she was improving. In a very short

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

time she again appeared at the opening, this time requesting me to turn the light fully upon her. By the aid of the powerful rays we all most eagerly scrutinised her face, which was calm and beautiful to look upon. The complexion was light and clear, the face full, with light grey eyes, which had a merry twinkle in them when looking at us, and a rather bold nose for a female. In order to enable Katie to remain longer in full view, I then slightly shifted the light, and she was therefore able to manifest in this most conclusive manner for upwards of fifteen minutes. She frequently drew back the head covering referred to, which enabled us to observe her full face, while she opened and shut her eyes, spoke to us individually, and kissed her hand repeatedly in bidding us adieu. She looked fully at me, requesting me to observe her closely, which I did with considerable gratification. Eventually she wished us all good night, adding most fervently, 'God bless you.' On opening the doors of the cabinet I found the medium [Florence Cook] entranced as before, and, on her recovering consciousness, carefully scrutinised the rope fastenings which were perfect—in fact, as I had left them at the commencement of the second sitting. I cut the knots off with the seals, which are now in my possession. The fastenings at the wrists were so tight as to leave a deep impress in the flesh, and had to be cut away with a pen-knife."

We have here one of the earlier reports of the "Katie King" phenomenon that would gradually grow ever more impressive over the next two years, with there later being many reports by distinguished witnesses of this Katie King phantom walking out of the cabinet, and walking around the room, as a full-sized human form who would often talk. The October 15, 1872 edition of *The Spiritualist* gives us a very long account of this phenomenon, including accounts by various named witnesses. We read this:

"The spirit Katie King is very much like Miss Cook, and this at-first was a great source of annoyance to the medium, though now many other spirit faces come bearing scarcely a trace of resemblance to Miss Cook....Katie's face is not always the same. Once she put it out of the cabinet as black as ink, and shining like patent leather ; on another occasion it had a chocolate colour. Her eyes are sometimes grey and sometimes dark. Her head is larger than that of Miss Cook; Katie has more breadth of forehead."

I will pass over a long anonymous account from this edition of witnessing this phenomenon, in accordance with my principle that testimony by a named witness dating his or her account has

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

far more value than any anonymous account, particularly when the account was written soon after the events described. We do get in this edition on page 74 a dated account by a witness who gives both her name and address. In a statement dated September 28, 1872 (a Saturday) Amelia Corner stated this, describing events she saw "last Friday."

"About 7.30 p.m. we entered the seance-room, when Miss Cook went immediately into the cabinet, inside of which were a chair, two tubes, and six yards of soft rope. The doors of the cabinet were closed and locked. The sitters were, Mr. and Mrs. Cook, the Misses Katie and Edith (the latter, I may remark, a most beautiful child of five years of age), Master Donald Cook, my daughter, and myself. We had only sat about three or four minutes, when the tubes began to be thrown about, and we heard Miss Cook beg of Katie, her spirit friend, not to knock her about so much. Miss Cook then said she was being tied, which process occupied about two minutes. The doors of the cabinet were then unlocked, and we found the medium securely tied, the rope being twice round each wrist, secured by about half a dozen knots on each ; it was then taken up to her neck, which was encircled by six coils of the rope, secured not only by a knot, but a pin, which Miss Cook wore in her collar, was taken out, and used also in pinning the rope, which was then made fast to the back of the chair. The knots were then sealed, and the doors again closed, Katie asking us to sing. The medium, during this time, was in her normal state, when the spirit Katie bid her go to sleep, telling her she would sing her to sleep...A hand was then seen at the opening, followed by a face—calm—beautiful, the eyes liquid and sparkling, the lids winking in a natural manner, a finely cut mouth, and very white teeth. On the top of the forehead she wore a white, apparently linen, band, which also formed her head dress. Upon our exclaiming how beautiful she was, she acknowledged the compliment, by gracefully bowing her head. The light was fully turned on the face, which remained five minutes; it then seemed to gently fall on one side and disappear. Katie next said she would show us a very beautiful face of a Parsee ; this appeared in the course of a few minutes. The Parsee wore a high, white head-dress, somewhat resembling a sugar-loaf, which was very becoming to her eastern cast of features. She turned her head round so that we might see her hair, and her beautifully-shaped ear. This face remained three minutes, when Katie told us we were to give up for a short time. The cabinet was then opened, and we found the medium deeply entranced. As soon as the effect had gone off, my daughter commenced to untie the knots ; with the help of a stiletto she accomplished the task in about nine minutes."

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

This is quite an account, with two mysteries hard to explain: how the medium (Florence Cook) got all tied up so thoroughly, and how such phantom faces could have appeared at the cabinet opening after Florence Cook had been so thoroughly tied up. The account here is first-class evidence. We have a dated account by a named witness, an account made either one day later or eight days after the described event; the account is very soon published in a newspaper; and the witness gives not only her address but the names of other witnesses present at the same time. The account is followed on page 74 by an account dated October 7, 1872 written by Edmund D. Rogers, describing events he saw on September 29, 1872. Rogers states this:

"*The seance took place in the breakfast-room, the circle consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Cook, Mrs. Cook's sister, Mr. and Mrs. Bird (of Brixton), Miss Florrie Cook (the medium) two younger sisters, and a brother, the servant of the house and myself...I begin then by saying that I had free access to the cabinet, and could find nothing but solid wood in front and solid walls behind ; and that notwithstanding that Mr. and Mrs. Cook very courteously allowed me to do just as I like I could throughout discover not the slightest symptoms of trickery or delusion and consequently do not believe that there were any. It should be noted too, that during the whole of the sitting—with a slight exception to which I shall presently refer—all the proceedings took place in the light of a good paraffin lamp....Miss Cook took her seat in the cabinet on a small canebottomed chair, placed with its back against the side wall the space from front to back not being deep enough to allow her to sit in any other way. At her feet I placed a long piece of soft rope, and having closed the doors and locked them, I put the key in my pocket and sat down within a few feet if the cabinet to 'watch and wait.'...Katie requested me to unlock the doors and look at the medium. I did so and found that she had been most elaborately bound to her chair. Each wrist was tied with a series of very beautiful knots very like a crochet chain in appearance, but, as I afterwards found much tighter than a crochet chain would be. From the wrists the rope passed round the waist, and thence in a very curious and ingenious manner round the neck in a kind of slip-knot, so that, as I found on trial, any motion of the hands would tighten it there, and so most effectually prevent the hands from being employed in active use. From the neck the rope was passed round the back of the chair, and finally tied in tight knots to the bottom ledge. I candidly confessed that I could not have tied the medium so securely as she had thus been tied by invisible agency. To 'make assurance doubly sure,' I waxed the knots sealed them with a spade guinea, locked the medium up in her narrow prison, and resumed my seat....Sure enough*

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

there appeared at the opening at the top of the cabinet what looked at first something like a slightly luminous disk, but which quickly took the form of a female face, as like as possible to any female face I ever saw in the flesh, except that I have not often been fortunate enough to see one so beautiful. And this face looked, smiled, nodded and talked to us several minutes—while at Katie's own request the light of the lamp was thrown full upon her....I sprang up at once, and unlocked and threw open the doors, hoping to catch a sight of Katie inside before she had finally vanished from our physical gaze ; but she had been too quick for me. All I found inside was Miss Cook, still in her trance, and bound as I had left her, not a knot loosened, and not even a seal broken. I set to work to release her, but the rope being so soft the knots had been formed so close and tight that I could do nothing with them with my nails, and so I had to use my teeth to them ; and even then it took me nearly ten minutes to set the medium free."

At the same seance Rogers reports seeing a Parsee (as did Corner), and Rogers comments how the face appeared quite different in several ways from the face of Florence Cook: "Her face was much fuller than Katie's, her eyes were of a different colour, and her hands were considerably smaller." We then read a letter from Earl Bird stating he was at the same seance, and that Rogers account (quoted above) is accurate. On page 75 we have an account by a Mr. Gledstanes reporting seeing similar things on October 9, 1872.

In the October 1872 edition of *The Spiritual Magazine*, pages 477 to 478, we have an account by William Howitt of making an unannounced visit to photographer Frederick Hudson, who had reported getting anomalous figures in some of his photos. Howitt did not tell his name. Howitt claims to have got from this visit "two photographs, perfect and unmistakable, of sons of mine, who passed into the spirit-world years ago." Two other people claimed the same identification after seeing the results. Howitt says that there was no existing image of one of the sons. The topic of Hudson's photos is dealt with in the book here, which has some interesting examples.

In an 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist,* page 118, we have an account by Mary R. Tucker dated December 23, 1872, regarding a seance involving the medium H. C. Gordon, occurring on November 13, 1872 at 406 Fourth Avenue in New York City. She says this:

"I arrived early at his abode, and had every facility afforded me for searching not only the apartments but the closets attached

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

thereto, his trunk, sofa bedstead, and rear of the altar, which is erected in the inner parlour, and neither masks nor habiliments for clothing automatons nor automatic figures were there discovered....The circle, consisting of six persons, arranged themselves around a table at about eight o'clock p.m., and shortly after the manifestations commenced. Eight spirits successively presented themselves, of whom six were recognised. Of two only (for fear of occupying too much space) will I especially speak : one of these was my own brother ; only his head and face were visible ; the resemblance was perfect. That it was neither a mask nor India rubber form, I am ready to affirm in any court and under any prescribed oath. The other to which I would draw attention, was the entire figure of a lady, the only entire one I have as yet seen, although I have attended several seances since."

In the November 1, 1872 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account by Horace Heywood dated October 28, 1872, describing a seance with Florence Cook held October 15, 1872. The account is very similar to the accounts above. In the November 15, 1872 edition of *The Spiritualist*, a W. Brooks provides a statement dated November 2, 1872, describing a seance with Florence Cook on October 18, 1872. He states this:

"The marvellous manifestations which I witnessed (which I had seen mentioned in your columns) were truly astonishing. The tying-up of the medium by unseen power or agency is, I should think, convincing enough for almost any sceptic, the knots of the cord being drawn so tightly, it was with great difficulty that I was able to untie them, and I feel quite positive that the medium could have had no hand in the matter herself. I helped to seal the knots, and after the manifestations of the various faces, the seals were quite intact, whereas if the medium had moved in the slightest, they must have been broken. Previous to my visit I had heard that the spirit Katie was so much like the medium herself, which raised doubts in some minds, but I could not see the slightest resemblance. The face was much smaller, and fair, with light eyes ; whereas the medium is very dark with brown eyes. The second face was smaller, resembling the face of a Hindoo child, about five or six months old. The next face of a female appeared to be about thirty years of age, with a broad flat face, which appeared to be in pain, but in neither of these three could I see the slightest resemblance to the medium."

A similar account is given in the December 15, 1872 edition of *The Spiritualist*, where we have a Theo. W. Taunton giving an account dated December 12, 1872, describing a seance with Florence Cook on November 30, 1872. The account is like the

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

previous one, but with a new wrinkle involving Florence being mysteriously tied up with black tape before the appearance of the strange phantom faces. In the January 1, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have an account of five named witnesses recording that the materialized spirit of Katie King requested a pen and paper, and wrote a short note, on December 18, 1872.

On page 56 of this edition we read a quote from the Social Review of December 18, 1872, noting how the seances of Florence Cook were receiving quite a lot of attention and also newspaper coverage:

"At the present moment Miss Florrie Cook, of Hackney, has far outstripped her contemporaries in 'spiritual' gifts. Skillful as Mr. [Daniel Dunglas] Home is in the arts of levitation and elongation, he has never yet succeeded in making his spirit-friends visible. Miss Cook undertakes to show those who visit her the very flesh and blood of the ghostly beings who hold communion with her whilst she is in the trance state. After such a promise our readers may imagine how Miss Cook's house is besieged with visitors—and how anxious her father should be to conceal his private address. The editors of two at least of the London daily papers have attended Miss Cook's seances, to say nothing of their ' specials.' The Daily Telegraph had a column and more about Miss Cook on the 10th October last. Lords and ladies, men of science, and literary gentlemen have been pouring in upon her abundantly, and it is not therefore surprising that some days ago we were pleased to be among the favoured few to whom Miss Cook is compelled to restrict her attentions."

We then hear an account like some of the ones above: the medium being tied up, the cabinet door closed, the appearance of mysterious faces at the cabinet door's opening, and the medium being found still tied up when the cabinet doors are opened.

In the January 1, 1873 edition of *The Spiritualist*, we have this very interesting report of a seance of December 14, 1872 involving Florence Cook:

"Miss Cook then went inside the cabinet, with Mr. Holmes, and the first result was that a face which had previously appeared could at once bear a somewhat stronger light; it also seemed to be more buoyant, for it several times floated up past the opening, and seemed, to come down slowly and with difficulty. It was an old gentleman, with a white necktie, and apparently faded into nothing below the necktie. Next ' Katie' appeared,

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

with her head-dress, as at Miss Cook's seances. Miss Cook was then entranced, six or eight feet from the opening, and Mr. Holmes was a little behind her, further off still. ***He says he saw something faintly luminous rising out of Miss Cook's body; this floated towards the opening, and, as it neared it, he distinguished the full-length form of Katie, connected with the medium by faintly luminous threads, extending from and to all parts of both bodies. When 'Katie' looked out of the cabinet, he could see the light from the outer room shining through her—she was translucent.*** *All this is specially interesting, because previously nobody had seen Miss Cook's manifestations from the inside of the cabinet, though many have tried."*

On December 26, 1872 the London mainstream paper *The Times* published an article on the paranormal manifestations that were being so widely reported at the time. The entire article is quoted at the beginning of the magazine here. We also have lengthy quotes from the article on page 59 of the January 1, 1873 newspaper here. At the beginning of *The Times* article we have a great example of what constantly occurs: mainstream sources perpetuating groundless achievement legends involving scientists. We read this:

"It is now nearly twenty years since the late Professor Faraday made public the result of his investigations into the then fashionable mania of table-turning. With apparent conclusiveness, he proved that the mysterious movements which were at that time the new nine-days' wonder of the world arose from unconscious muscular action; but such is the tenacity of a belief once received into the mind, this solution of the pseudo-marvel seems to have satisfied few but those who were prepared to accept it by previous disbelief."

The claim made is one of the most groundless of the many groundless achievement legends cited about scientists. Faraday never investigated the extremely widely reported phenomena involving tables inexplicably moving. In massive numbers, witnesses reported tables levitating, tables standing on two legs, and tables moving around inexplicably when no one touched them, all phenomena inexplicable under the hypothesis of unconscious muscular action advanced by Faraday.

The Times article also had a great example of the very biased reporting that so massively occurs when mainstream sources report on topics of paranormal phenomena. The article mentions the investigation of the London Dialectical Society. As

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

I discuss here, the report listed very many witnesses reporting the most dramatic and inexplicable paranormal phenomena, and the committee concluded that real phenomena were occurring. But rather than honestly summarizing the findings of the Society's investigation, the *Times* describes it as finding merely that the phenomena were worthy of investigation.

We then have the Times writer reporting on what he saw at a seance involving Kate Fox and Daniel Dunglas Home. The account is a perfect example of refusing to be convinced after viewing the most inexplicable phenomena. The writer states this:

"*Miss Fox then got up and went to the door of the room, inviting us to stand by her and to hold her hands, which we did, when* ***loud thumps seemed to come from the panels, as if done with the fist****. These were repeated at our request a desired number of times. To give a detailed account of everything which occurred would need more space than we can now spare.* ***Suffice it to say, that the table was made light and heavy at our wish, that it moved in every direction, that there were vibrations of the floor and of our chairs, that on Mr. Home holding the accordion under the table in his right hand, and by the end furthest from the keys, it played a distinct tune, Mr. Home's left hand being on the table, and his feet so raised as to be visible.*** *All other hands were on the table. At the same time, and under the same conditions, a small handbell was rung in different parts of the space beneath the table. The gas [i.e. the light] was now turned out and the two spirit-lamps lit; these gave a fair light. The raps became louder, and, in the usual method, directed us to take a leaf out of the table.* ***This was done, when the table appeared to float up about eight inches off the floor, settling down again in a gentle swaying manner****. The thin wooden lath lying on the cloth was seen by the whole party to be in motion. It tilted up sideways and endways, and then seemed to float backwards and forwards. Holding our hand three inches, as near as we could guess, above the cloth,* ***the lath rose three times ; the last time it touched our hand, and directly afterwards the table jumped and shook violently, and loud raps seemed to come from all parts of it and of the floor. ...*** *We tried every test we could think of. A subdued light, darkened as the evening went on, was one of the conditions we were obliged to comply with, and while the accordion was in our hand we were desired to sit passive, though, as we stated, the hands and feet of the 'mediums' were in strict custody.* ***Mr. Home seemed to wish to conceal***

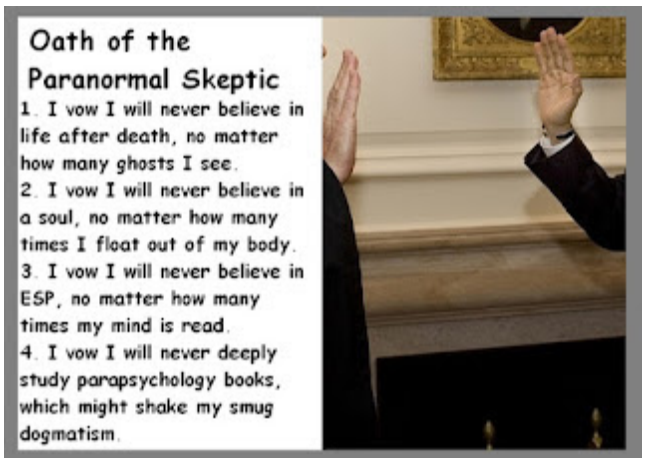
- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

nothing, and gave us every opportunity consistent with the above conditions for satisfying our scepticism. Yet we need hardly say that we were unable to. satisfy it. *By his request we got under the table with a lamp a great many times, insisted always on seeing his hands and feet, or on having them as well as those of Miss Fox held firmly. As to the hand with which Mr. Home held the accordion under the table, all we know is that on one of our sub-mahogany expeditions with the spirit-lamp,* ***we saw that hand quite still, and saw the accordion moving up and down and playing music****. We heard the key-notes, but the position of the instrument prevented our seeing the keys moving, if they did move. T****here was nothing during the whole evening except the phenomena themselves to suggest imposture. We tried our best to detect it, but could find no trace of it. We searched Mr. Home, and found nothing whatever upon him but his clothes.****"*

Immediately after giving this account of a demonstration that would convince any reasonable person that some inexplicable phenomenon was occurring, a demonstration that revealed no sign of trickery despite the writer's diligent attempts to find it, our *Times* writer declared he is still not convinced, and states this:

"We are certain that the table rose from the ground, that our hand received a sprig under the table from what felt like another hand, but how these things happened we do not know. The nature of the phenomena and of human nature are such as to force us to suspect imposture and legerdemain until we can satisfy ourselves of the true causes, whatever these may be."

We are left with the impression that some witnesses will not be convinced by any thing they may see. We have here an example of the kind of stubbornness that still massively persists today:


Oath of the Paranormal Skeptic
1. I vow I will never believe in life after death, no matter how many ghosts I see.
2. I vow I will never believe in a soul, no matter how many times I float out of my body.
3. I vow I will never believe in ESP, no matter how many times my mind is read.
4. I vow I will never deeply study parapsychology books, which might shake my smug dogmatism.

The comments above made about Kate Fox and mysterious noises were echoed in an 1872 book by Robert Dale Owen, once a US congressman. Owen states this about "spirit raps":

"I have heard them as delicate, tiny tickings, and as thundering poundings. I have heard them not only throughout our own land, but in foreign countries ; as in England, France, Italy. I have heard them in broad daylight and in darkened rooms ; usually most violent in the latter. I have heard them in my own house and in a hundred others ; out of doors ; at sea and on land ; in steamer and in sail-boat ; in the forest and on the rocks of the sea-shore.

But in no circumstances have I witnessed this wonderful phenomenon under such varied conditions, and with such satisfactory results, as in the presence of two members of that family, in whose dwelling in Western New York, it originally showed itself — namely, the eldest and the youngest daughters of Mrs. Fox...In Leah Fox (Mrs. Underhill) and in Kate Fox I have found the manifestations of this power, or gift, in connection with the spirit-rap, more marked and more readily to be obtained, than in any other persons with whom I am acquainted, either hear or in Europe.

And it is due to these ladies and to Mr. Underhill to say that they have kindly afforded me at all times every facility I could desire to test these and other spiritual phenomena under the strictest precautions against deception : well knowing that I took these for the sake of others rather than to remove doubts of my own. Nor, in all my intercourse with them, have I ever seen the slightest cause for believing that they were actuated by other motive than a frank wish that the truth should be ascertained and acknowledged."

The comments made above about Kate Fox were echoed two years later by the leading scientist Sir William Crookes, in his January, 1874 edition of the Quarterly Journal of Science, where there occurred the publication of his paper "NOTES OF AN ENQUIRY INTO THE PHENOMENA CALLED SPIRITUAL, DURING THE YEARS 1870-73." The paper (which includes a statement of the reality of mysterious inexplicable sounds, particularly in the presence of Kate Fox) can be read here, and will be discussed in the "1874" installment of this "Spookiest Years" series.

On page 385 of the book 1872 here, Robert Dale Owen tells us that he was told (in person and in writing) by Mrs. Davis, the widow of a former governor of Massachusetts (John Davis), that she saw in full midday daylight a pen untouched by any hand

rising up in the air and writing. We are told, "It wrote a brief message of affection from a dear friend of Mrs. Davis, deceased some years before : then dropped on the paper."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: levitation, materialization, mediums, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism

Sunday, December 31, 2023

When "Spirit Writings" Show an Impressive Prowess (Part 1)

At various times people have produced writings that they claimed were spirit-guided or spirit-produced. It is sometimes said that such works are typically unimpressive. But I am aware of some works of this type that seem to show a keen prowess.

One such work is the book *Spirit Teachings* by William Stainton Moses, which can be read online here. William Stainton Moses was a highly regarded figure of the nineteenth century, very respected for his scholarship and character. The book *Spirit Teachings* consists mainly of words that William said he produced through what is called automatic writing. In automatic writing, a person will typically put a pen next to some paper, and then go into a kind of trance state. The person's hand will write, but the person may state he had no knowledge of what was being written. The person may claim that some spirit temporarily took control of his hand, and that what was written on the paper was the product of that spirit's mind, not his own mind.

In the book William Stainton Moses gives us writings that he identifies as coming from a mysterious personality called Imperator. William Stainton Moses claims that he has merely received the teachings of this Imperator individual through automatic writing. The teachings of Imperator often conflict with ideas previously held by William Stainton Moses.

Here from page 190 to 191 is an example of the sophisticated writing found in the book, teachings attributed to this Imperator source:

"You do not imagine God as an omnipotent, omnipresent man, living in a place where His throne is surrounded by a throng who do nought else but worship and adore, as men would worship were they to see God amongst them on earth. Such a heaven is but a baseless dream. Into spirit-life spirit alone can enter. You know that you have outgrown the fable of the bodily translation of a material frame somewhere into the skies,

there to live as it had lived on earth, in the society of a God who was human in all respects save that He was superhuman, in a heaven which was borrowed from the images of a vision which typified under a symbol spiritual truth to John the Seer.... A translation will await each good and true man, but not of his human flesh and bones. His glorified spirit shall rise from the dead and worn-out shroud of flesh that has served its purpose, to a brighter life than man has pictured, in a brighter heaven than human seer has ever imaged."

There follow on page 191-192 a passage from this Imperator source which some will regard as being of high philosophical sophistication:

"Moreover, man has fancied that each revelation of God enshrines permanent truth of universal application, of literal and exact accuracy. He did not see that man is taught by us as man teaches his own children; and accurate definitions of abstract truth do not suit the comprehension of a child. With all the literalness of a child, he accepts the very words of revelation as mathematically and logically accurate, and builds upon them a number of theories, absurd in their nature, and conflicting among themselves. The child accepts the parent's word unhesitatingly, and quotes it as law. It is only later that he learns that he was being taught in parables. Man has dealt with Revelation in the same way. He has assumed literal exactness where there is only Oriental imagery, and mathematical accuracy where he has only a very fallible and frequently legendary record. So he has perpetuated ignorant ideas about a jealous God, and a fiery hell, and a heaven in the skies where the elect are gathered, and a physical resurrection, and a universal assize, and such notions, which belong to the age of childhood and are outgrown by the developed man. The man should put aside the notions of the child, and soar to higher knowledge.

But in place of that legendary belief, primitive superstitions, ignorant fancies, are perpetuated. The hyperbolical visions of an imaginative people are taken for hard fact ; and a medley of fancy, folly, and truth is jumbled together, which no reflecting mind on an advanced plane of knowledge can continue to accept as matter of belief. Faith is the cord that has bound together this incoherent mass. We cut that cord, and bid you use your reason to try that which has been received and held by faith alone. You will find much in the mass that is of human invention, dating from the infancy of man's mind. You will reject much that is both cumbersome and profitless. But you will find a residue that commends itself to reason, is attested by your own experience, and is *derived from God. You will gather*

hints of what the good God destines for his creatures."

The words I have quoted are not untypical at all, but are representative of the literary skill with which this Imperator "spirit personality" typically speaks in the book.

On page 209 we have this remarkable testimony from William Stainton Moses:

"From this time forward repeated evidence of individuality perpetuated after bodily death was brought home to me. I do not interrupt the course of the teachings to detail them. Some were written communications, in which peculiarities of handwriting, spelling, and diction were accurately reproduced. Some were verbal communications made through my own guide. Some were laboriously rapped out in the circle. Some were corroborated by my clairvoyant vision. The ways used to convey the information were various, but all agreed in one particular. The facts given were invariably literally and exactly true. In most cases they related to persons not known to us except by name, sometimes not even by so much as that. In other cases they related to friends and acquaintances.
This course of evidence continued for a long time ; and collaterally I developed a power of clairvoyant vision which rapidly increased, until I was able to see and converse at length with my invisible friends. The inner faculties seemed to be opened, so that the information given received new confirmation from my clairvoyant sight. This power eventually developed to a very high degree. I had a number of extremely vivid visions in which my spirit appeared to act independently of the body. During some of them I was conscious of living and acting among scenes not of this earth ; in others dramatic tableaux were enacted before me, the object evidently being to represent some spiritual truth or teaching to me. In two cases only was I able to satisfy myself by collateral evidence of the reality of my vision. I was in deep trance during each occasion, and could not distinguish between the subjective impressions of a dream and the real occurrence of what I so vividly saw before me, save that I could confirm in these two cases what I saw and heard in vision by what I afterwards discovered from external sources. The scene in these cases was real, and I do not doubt that it was so in all."

Charlton Templeman Speer claims to have witnessed a variety of paranormal phenomena at seances of William Stainton Moses, a 19th-century figure greatly admired for his scholarship and moral character. One thing he claims to have witnessed is something resembling teleportation. He states this:

"The passage of matter through matter was sometimes strikingly demonstrated by the bringing of various articles from other rooms, though the doors were closed and bolted. Photographs, picture-frames, books, and other objects were frequently so brought, both from rooms on the same floor and from those above. How they came through the closed doors I cannot say, except by some process of de-materialisation, but come they certainly did, apparently none the worse for the process, whatever it might have been."

Besides also describing numerous inexplicable scents and mysterious music, Speer tells us that orbs were seen rising up from the ground and apparently passing through a heavy table. We read this:

"These lights were of two different kinds— objective and subjective. The former usually resembled ***small illuminated globes****, which shone brightly and steadily, often moved rapidly about the room, and were visible to all the sitters. A curious fact in connection with these lights always struck me, viz., that looking on to the top of the table* ***one could see a light slowly ascending from the floor, and to all appearance passing out through the top of the table — the table itself apparently not affording any obstacle to one's view of the light."***

On page 187 of the April 1861 edition of *The Spiritual Magazine*, we have a poem "recited by Miss Lizzie Doteny a spiritual trance speaker, of America, at the close of a recent lecture in Boston," who "professed to give it impromptu, so far as she was concerned, and to speak under the direct influence of the spirit of Edgar A. Poe." The poem has a stylistic resemblance to Poe's famous poem "The Raven," but the tone of the poem is far more optimistic than that poem famous for its gloom. The very skillfully written poem is below:

From the throne of life eternal,
From the home of love supernal,
Where the angel feet make music over all the starry floors
Mortals, I have come to meet you,
Come with words of peace to greet you,
And to tell you of the glory that is mine for evermore.

Once before I found a mortal
Waiting at the heavenly portal—
Waiting but to catch some echo from that ever-opening door;
Then I seized his quickened being,
And through all his inward seeing,
Caused my burning inspiration in a fiery flood to pour!

Now I come more meekly human,
And the weak lips of a woman,
Touch with fire from off the altar, not with burnings as of yore;
But in holy love descending,
With her chastened being blending,
I would fill your souls with music from the bright celestial shore.

As one heart yearns for another,
As a child turns to its mother,
From the golden gates of glory turn I to the earth once more,
Where I drained the cup of sadness,
Where my soul was stung to madness,
And life's bitter, burning billows swept my burdened being o'er.

Here the harpies and the ravens,
Human vampires—sordid cravens,
Preyed upon my soul and substance till I writhed in anguish sore;
Life and I then seemed mismated,
For I felt accursed and fated,
Like a restless, wrathful spirit, wandering on the Stygian shore.

Tortured by a nameless yearning,
Like a frost-fire, freezing, burning,
Did the purple, pulsing life-tide through its fevered channels pour,
Till the golden bowl—Life's token—
Into shining shards was broken,
And my chained and chafing spirit leapt from out its prison door.

But while living, striving, dying,
Never did my soul cease crying;
" Ye who guide the fates and furies, give! oh, give me, I implore,
From the myriad hosts of nations—
From the countless constellations,
One pure spirit that can love me—one that I, too, can adore !"

Through this fervent aspiration
Found my fainting soul salvation,
For, from out its blackened fire crypts, did my quickened spirit soar;
And my beautiful ideal—
Not too saintly to be real—
Burst more brightly on my vision than the fancy-formed Lenore.

'Mid the surging seas she found me,

With the billows breaking round me,
And my saddened, sinking spirit in her arms of love upbore;
Like a lone one, weak and weary,
Wandering in the midnight dreary,
On her sinless, saintly bosom, brought me to the heavenly shore.

Like the breath of blossoms blending,
Like the prayers of saints ascending,
Like the rainbow's seven-hued glory, blend our souls for evermore.
Earthly love and lust enslaved me,
But divinest love hath saved me,
And I know now, first and only, how to love and to adore.

Oh, my mortal friends and brothers!
We are each and all another's,
And the soul that gives most freely from its treasure hath the more.
Would you lose your life, you find it ;
And in giving love, you bind it,
Like an amulet of safety, to your heart for evermore."

The 1854 book "Voices from Spirit Land" (which lists Nathan F. White as its author) attempts to persuade us in its introduction that the poetry that makes up most of the book was written by spirits. We read this:

"Here is a volume of more than two hundred pages, spoken and written in obedience to superior influences by one who, in a normal condition, possesses no such power of utterance. This volume of 'Voices From the Spirit Land' is, to our belief, no more the conscious product of the Medium through whom its utterance is claimed to have occurred, than it is the work of some Patagonian yet unborn."

The author Nathan F. White is described like this: "A gentle-hearted, simpleminded young man ; diffident and unpretending in whatever sphere ; with only the limited common-school education of a humble New-England farmer's son ; a daily hand-toiler since his early youth ; without imagination or ideality beyond the measure of Pollock's happy man." Later it is claimed, "Under the influence of other spirits he has been made to speak in various languages, with all the ease and grace of persons native to them ; and to write in German, or Hebrew, or Arabic, with a rapidity and perfection of chirography impossible to natural skill." We hear this description of White entering into a trance:

"The slowly-growing rigidity, death-like pallor, spasmodic tremors, and icy-cold sweat gathering like 'beaded dew' upon the brow of the Medium while in process of entrancement, preparatory to speaking, were what no man could counterfeit. And when the voice issued, as it were from a body dead to outward impression and appearance, the veriest skeptic felt that this was more than mortal."

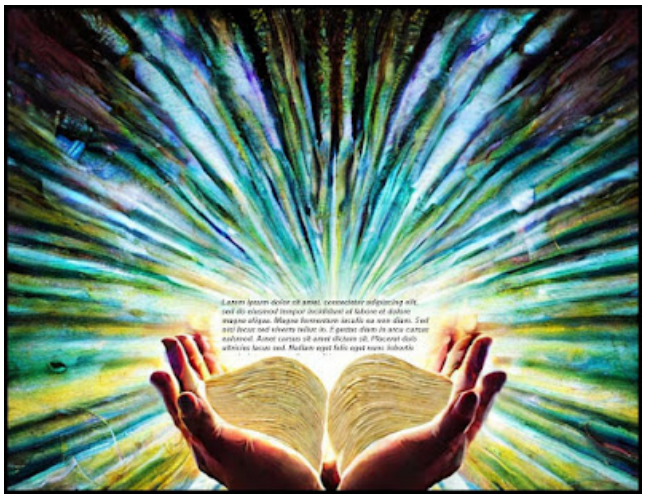
The volume contains very high quality poetry. It includes the poem "Weep Not for the Dead" which is below:

Rejoice for the day,
When that mansion of clay
The spirit no longer confines ;
When 'tis free to arise
To its home in the skies,
Where love's light eternally shines.

When a spirit oppressed
Flies away to the rest
It sought for in vain on the earth,
And forgets every wrong
In the triumphant song
That welcomes the new angel-birth ;

When it leaves all its fears,
All its sad, bitter tears
Behind with the moldering form ;
For bright regions of bliss.
Leaves a world of distress,
And bids a farewell to earth's storm —
...
Once, o'erburdened with care,
And weighed down with despair,
Of hope and of comfort bereft —
Now, 'tis gazing with love
On those angels above.
Forgetting the sorrows it's left.

Then no longer weep
For the loved ones that sleep —
Though taken away from thy sight ;
For you'll meet them again,
Free from anguish and pain.
In mansions of eternal light."



In 1861 there began the American Civil War, which would rage for four years, and end in the abolition of slavery in the United States. The events seem to have been predicted by an 1859 book entitled "Twelve Messages from the Spirit of John Quincy Adams." The first page of the book says the book was written in a trance state by the medium Joseph D. Stiles, " in an almost perfect fac-simile of that peculiar, tremulous handwriting of Mr. Adams in the last years of his earthly life, — a handwriting which probably no man living could, in his natural state of mind, so perfectly imitate, and which is wholly unlike the usual handwriting of the medium."

The preface is by Josiah Brigham, who tells us Joseph D. Stiles is a printer of "common education," seemingly someone without the intellectual or educational background to have produced the lofty writings that came from his pen. Brigham tells of an event that led him to believe some paranormal agency was occurring. Brigham says this:

"My first acquaintance with Mr. Stiles was in June of 1854. He came to my house to hold a circle in the evening, and a number of personal friends were present by invitation. On seating ourselves around the table, the medium was soon influenced to make a prayer, and, immediately after the prayer, was influenced to write, and the very first communication written out by him there was one purporting to be from a brother of mine, who died in 1818, which commenced as follows :

'Dear brother Josiah : I am very glad, after the lapse of many years, to be able to communicate to you. I am glad that you feel an interest in the cause of Spiritualism, for it is a beautiful theory, which, when you can believe with sincerity, cannot but help to smooth the declivity of life. It is doubly sweet to me to communicate to you, because I do it under the roof where my spirit took its flight from the things of earth. * * * *

Winslow Brigham.'

This last sentence struck me very forcibly ; for truly it was in the house where I now live, and in which I then lived, that my brother died ; and this fact was wholly unknown to the medium, as was also the fact that I ever had a brother by that name."

In that 1859 book on pages 318 to 319 we read this:

"We are able to discern the period rapidly approximating when man will take up arms against his fellow-man, and go forth to contend with the enemies of Republican Liberty, and to assert, at the point of the bayonet, those rights, of which so large a portion of their fellow-creatures are deprived. Again will the soil of America be saturated with the blood of freedom loving children, and her noble monuments, those sublime attestations of patriotic will and determination, will tremble, from base to summit, with the heavy roar of artillery, and the thunder of cannon. The trials of that internal war will far exceed those of the War of the Revolution, while the cause contended for will equal, if not excel, in sublimity and power, that for which the children of '76 fought."

"But when the battle-smoke shall disappear, and the cannon's fearful tones are heard no more, then will mankind more fully realize the blessings outflowing from the mighty struggle in which they so valiantly contended! No longer will their eyes meet with those bound in the chains of physical slavery, or their ears listen to the heavy sobs of the Oppressed child of God. But o'er a land dedicated to the principles of impartial liberty the King of Day will rise and set, and hearts now oppressed with care and sorrow will rejoice in the blessings of uninterrupted freedom."

" In this eventful revolution, what the patriots of the past tailed to accomplish, their descendants will perform, with the timely assistance of invisible powers. By their sides the heavenly hosts will labor, imparting courage and fortitude in each hour of despondency, and urging them onward to a speedy and magnificent triumph. Deploring, as we do, the existence of slavery, and the means to be employed to purge it from America, yet our sympathies will culminate to the cause of Right and Justice, and give strength to those

'Who seek to set the captive free
And crush the monster, Slavery.'

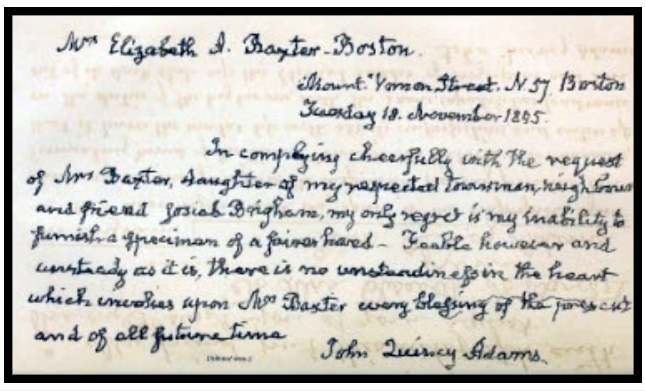
"The picture which I have presented is, indeed, a hideous one. ***You may think that I speak with too much assurance***

when I thus boldly prophesy the dissolution of the American Confederacy, and, through it, the destruction of that gigantic structure, Human Slavery ! *But this knowledge was not the result of a moment's or an hour's gleaning, but nearly half a century's existence in the Seraph Life. I have carefully watched my country's rising progress, and I am thoroughly convinced that it cannot always exist under the present Federal Constitution, and the pressure of that most terrible sin, Slavery !"*

The prediction was remarkably accurate. A war largely over whether slavery would persist did indeed start soon after the prediction, beginning in 1861. That civil war (indeed an "internal war") did cause bloodshed greater than that occurring in the American Revolutionary War. There did indeed occur " the dissolution of the American Confederacy, and, through it, the destruction of that gigantic structure, Human Slavery." The southern states of the United States formed a government called the Confederate States of America, and that was often called simply the Confederacy. That Confederacy was dissolved when the North won the war in 1865, and the result of that dissolution was the end of slavery in the United States. The "present Federal Constitution" existing in 1859 did not persist unchanged, being altered in the 1860's with a constitutional amendment prohibiting slavery.

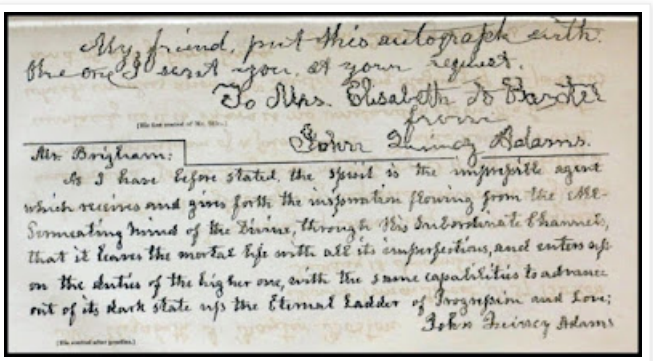
"Twelve Messages from the Spirit of John Quincy Adams" holds up pretty well to the scrutiny of the modern reader. The book mainly tells long accounts of afterlife glories, and accounts of the narrator meeting various famous deceased people.

On one page the book gives this sample of the late handwriting of John Quincy Adams in 1845 (he died in 1848):


Mrs Elizabeth A. Baxter Boston.
Mount Vernon Street. N 57 Boston
Tuesday 18. November 1845.
In complying cheerfully with the request of Mrs Baxter, daughter of my respected Townsman, neighbour and friend Josiah Brigham, my only regret is my inability to furnish a specimen of a fairer hand - Feeble however and unsteady as it is, there is no unsteadiness in the heart which encircles upon Mrs Baxter every blessing of the present and of all future time
John Quincy Adams

On the next page the book gives two samples of the writing of the medium Joseph D. Stiles, while he was in trance and

producing writings signed as John Quincy Adams. The first is the first such writing, and the second a later writing.


My friend, put this autograph with
the one I sent you, at your request.
To Mrs. Elizabeth D Barker
from
John Quincy Adams.
Mr. Brigham:
As I have before stated, the spirit is the imperfect agent
which receives and gives forth the information flowing from the All-
Permeating Mind of the Divine, through His Subordinate Channels;
that it leaves the mortal life with all its imperfections, and enters upon the duties of the higher one, with the same capabilities to advance out of its dark state up the Eternal Ladder of Progression and Love;
John Quincy Adams

The second piece of handwriting shown above has a close resemblance to the 1845 handwriting of John Quincy Adams.

In Part 2 of this series (which may not be my next post) I will look at what are perhaps the two most astonishing cases of alleged sprit writings: the case of Patience Worth and the case of Chico Xavier.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: automatic writing, channeling, life after death, mediums, paranormal phenomena, trance phenomena, xenoglossy

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Saturday, December 23, 2023

Spookiest Years, Part 9: The Year 1871

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1869. In this installment I will look at accounts of spooky events occurring during the year 1871.

In the February 1, 1871 edition of the short-lived *Spiritual News*, page 1, we have a report of a strange phenomenon at a seance occurring about a week earlier. We read that after "the door was locked" two large drawings were found on the table where the witnesses sat, with one of the witnesses (Helen Louisa Chevalier) saying the drawings came from her home three miles away. We then read this:

"A few seconds afterwards, something soft was felt falling like snow, for about half a minute, perpendicularly downwards upon tile heads and bodies of the sitters at all parts of the room, and somebody exclaimed, ' Why, its feathers!' By this time the room had been in darkness about three minutes, and then a light was struck. The scene then revealed was wintry in the extreme. Everybody and everything between the four walls of the room was covered with white feathers ; the heads, shoulders, and knees of those present were thickly covered ; the table in the centre looked like a large, circular cake of snow, and the tresses of the ladies, as well as the trimmings of their garments, were clustered with little white feathers. These feathers had fallen perpendicularly at all parts of the room ; they fell vertically between the sitters, down on to the floor between the chairs....It may be stated, that the room has an ordinary plain whitewashed ceiling, everywhere visible."

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Scientist Flubs and Flops #8

SETI Scientist Misspoke Sagan-Style

► June (10)

► May (11)

► April (10)

► March (8)

► February (7)

We are given the full names of about 17 witnesses claiming to have seen such a wonder, and the addresses of many of them are given.

In the June 15, 1871 edition of *The Spiritualist*, page 170, we have a report by numerous witnesses claiming to have seen a case of human teleportation. Here is the original account, signed by a series of witnesses, along with the witnesses who attested to have seen this marvel on June 3, 1871:

" On Saturday evening, June 3rd, at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, High Holborn, London, W.C., a séance was held in the rooms of Messrs. Herne and Williams, mediums. Before the séance began, the doors communicating with the passage outside were locked. The proceedings began, at the request of the mediums, with prayer. Then spirit lights, like small stars, were seen moving about, after which a conversation between the spirits John King and Katie King, was heard. John said, 'Katie, you can't do it.' Katie replied, ' I will, I tell you I will.' John said, ' I tell you you can't.' She answered, 'I will.' Mr. Harrison then said, ' Can you bring Mrs. Guppy ? ' There was no reply, but a member of the circle urged that the attempt should not be made. Within three minutes after Katie had said, ' I will,' a single heavy sound was heard for an instant on the centre of the table. Mr. Edwards put out his hand and said, ' There is a dress here.' A light was instantly struck, and Mrs. Guppy was found standing motionless on the centre of the table, trembling all over ; she had a pen and an account-book in her hands. Her right hand, with the pen in it, was over her eyes. She was spoken to by those present, but did not seem to hear ; the light was then placed in another room, and the door was closed for an instant ; John King then said, ' She'll be all right presently.' After the lapse of about four minutes after her arrival, she moved for the first time, and began to cry. The time of her arrival was ten minutes past eight. Mrs. Edmiston, Mr. Edwards, and Mr. Harrison went at once to one of the doors, and found it still locked; the other door could not be opened during the séance, because the back of the chair of one of the sitters was against it. There was no cupboard, article of furniture, or anything else in the rooms, in which it was possible for anybody to conceal themselves, and, if there had been, we, the undersigned witnesses, are all certain that by no natural means could Mrs. Guppy have placed herself instantaneously on the centre of a table round which we were all sitting shoulder to shoulder."

"Mrs. Guppy said that the last thing she remembered before she found herself on the table, was that she was sitting at home at Highbury, talking to Miss Neyland, and entering some household accounts in her book. The ink in the pen was wet when she arrived in our midst ; the last word of the writing in

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► 2021 (92)
► 2020 (99)
► 2019 (95)
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the book was incomplete, and was wet and smeared. She complained that she was not dressed in visiting costume, and had no shoes on, as she had been sitting at the fire without them. As she stated this to Mr. Morris, and Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, a pair of slippers dropped on the floor from above, one of them grazing Mr. Morris's head ; this was after the séance, and in the light. We all went into the dark room for a few minutes afterwards, and four flower-pots with flowers in them, which Mrs. Guppy declared to be from her home, were placed on the table at once. "

"After tea a second séance was held. Within a minute or two after the light was put out, there was a cry for a light, and Mr. Herne was seen by four persons falling from above, on to his chair. There were bundles of clothes belonging to Mr. Guppy, Mrs. Guppy, and Miss Neyland on the table, and Mr. Herne declared he had just seen Miss Neyland in Mrs. Guppy's house ; that she had pushed the clothes into his arms, and told him to ' go to the devil.' The light was again put out, and when it was struck once more, Mr. Williams was missing. He was found in the next room, lying in an insensible state on some clothes belonging to Mr. Guppy. He said on awaking that he had been to Mr. Guppy's house, and saw Miss Neyland, who was sitting at a table, and seemed to he praying."

N. Haqger, 46, Moorgate-street.

Caroline Edmiston, Beckenham.

C. E. Edwards, Kilburn-square, Kilburn.

Henry Morris, Mount Trafford, Eccles, near Manchester.

Elizabeth Guppy, 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, N.

Ernest Edwards, Kilburn-square, Kilburn.

Henry Clifford Smith, 38, Ennis-road, Stroudgreen.

H. B. Husk, 26, Sandwich-street,

W.C. Charles E. Williams, 61, Lamb's Conduitstreet, W.C.

E. Herne, Gl, Lamb's Conduit-street, W.C.

W. H. Harrison, Wilmin Villa, Chaucer - road, S.E."

We have here an astonishing report of a seance in a dark room with locked doors. The witnesses claim that a woman living quite a distance away was inexplicably deposited on the round table that they surrounded. There is no way to explain this report by imagining some kind of trickery by one or two people. The only halfway-credible hypothesis a skeptic might use to

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

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- A Table Listing 50 Things Science Cannot Explain
- 30 Reasons for Doubting the "Brains Store Memories" Dogma
- Why We Do Not Understand the Origin of Any Adult Human Being
- A Very Strong Effect of Repeating Patterns in Mysterious Striped Orbs
- They Had Flourishing Minds But Broken Brains
- Paradoxes That Puncture Professorial Pretensions
- Humanity Prerequisites: A Table of 18 Anthropic Requirements
- When World-Class Scientists Saw Ghosts (Part 1)
- The Enigma of Veridical Near-Death Experiences
- When Natural Things Seem to Act in a Shockingly Unnatural Way
- Are Public Schools Teaching a Stealth Religion?
- The Building Blocks of Bad Science Literature
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 Cases
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
- Biological Orthodoxy Flunks the Software Test
- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

dismiss the report is to claim that the report is all a big lie, and that nothing of the sort happened. Here the skeptic is forced into becoming a conspiracy theorist, imagining some conspiracy by witnesses who falsely claimed to have seen something they never saw.

In 1875 an article in the *Quarterly Journal of Science* would refer to the incident above, and mention other cases of reported teleportation of humans:

"As Newton is held to have proved that gravitation and inertia in every mass are proportional, we might expect that whatever overbears the former would be equally capable of neutralising the latter; and, in fact, the elder records hardly speak of visible suspensions like those of Mr. Home, but mainly of ***sudden unseen transfers of the person to a distance*** *; like that alleged of Dr. Monck last year, from his own residence at Bristol to the garden of his friend, Mr. Young, at Swindon ; or the earlier but better attested one of Mrs. Guppy, from her house at Holloway to a circle of her friends assembled at No. 61, Lamb's Conduit Street; or, a few months ago, that of Mr. Henderson, a well-known photographer of London, for a smaller distance, but attested by eighteen persons besides himself—the nine assembled with him at Mr. Guppy's, and the whole Stokes family, at Highbury, where he was unexpectedly found."*

The source here on page 212 lists May 21, 1871 as the beginning of the mysterious materialization phenomenon involving Katie King and Florence Cook and May 21, 1874 as the end of the phenomenon. That phenomenon is one of history's most interesting and well-documented reports of the paranormal. The earliest mention I can find of Florence Cook is the June 15, 1871 edition of *The Spiritualist*. We have a letter entitled "A New Medium" dated June 9, 1871. We hear of a fifteen-year-old

- A "Water Memory" Effect I Have Often Photographed
- 25 Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death
- Why the Origin of Language Is Inexplicable Under Orthodox Assumptions
- Visualizing a Top-Down Theory of Mind and Cosmic Connectivity
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- Cosmic Coincidence Cover-up
- The Gigantic Missing Link of Biological Life
- Cosmic Fine-Tuning Visualized
- Why Machines Will Not Soon Be as Intelligent as Men
- Cloud Computing and the Concept of Non-local Consciousness
- There Is No Plausible Explanation For How Brains Can Store Very Long-Term Memory
- The Top 6 Problems With Using a Multiverse to Explain Cosmic Fitness
- "Vacuum Catastrophe" Should Be Called the Vacuum Miracle
- Why the Origin of Humans Is an Unsolved Mystery
- The Best Basis for Believing in an Afterlife Is Something Other Than Paranormal Phenomena
- Still More Dreams or Visions That Seemed to Foretell a Death
- The Evidence for Out-of-Body Experiences
- GOAL and Soul: Postulating What We Need to Explain Humans
- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

medium referred to as Florrie, the daughter of a Mr. and Mrs. Cook. We hear only of spooky table movements and what sounds like some kind of levitation. The editor notes, "We have seen a very little of Miss Cook's mediumship, and think that it will develop into something above the average." That hunch turned out to be correct, with people later reporting around Florence Cook some of the most inexplicable phenomena ever recorded. You will read about such phenomena in subsequent installments of this series.

In the July 15, 1871 edition of *The Spiritualist*, there is a very astonishing account of levitation by the medium Daniel Dunglas Home, who many people claimed to see levitating. The account is by a Lord Lindsay. Here is some of what Lord Lindsay states:

"I was sitting with Mr. Home and Lord Adare, and a cousin of his. During the. sitting Mr. Home went into a trance, and in that state was carried out of the window in the room next to where we were, and was brought in at our window. The distance between the windows was about 7ft. 6in., and there was not the slightest foothold between them, nor was there more than a 12-inch projection to each window, which served as a ledge to put flowers on. We heard the window in the next room lifted up, and almost immediately after ***we saw Home floating in the air outside our window.*** *The moon was shining full into the room ; my back was to the light, and I saw the shadow on the wall of the window-sill, and Home's feet about six inches above it. He remained in this position for a few seconds, then raised the window and glided into the room, feet foremost, and sat down. Lord Adare then went into the next room to look at the window from which he had been carried. It was raised about eighteen inches, and he expressed his wonder how Mr. Home had been taken through so narrow an aperture. Home said (still in trance), 'I will show you;' and then, with his back to the window, he leaned back, and was shot out of the aperture head first with the body rigid, and then returned quite quietly. The window is about seventy feet from the ground. I very much doubt whether any skilful tight-rope dancer would like to attempt a feat of this description, where the only means of crossing would be by a perilous leap, or being borne across in such a manner as I have described, placing the question of the light aside."*

The October 15, 1871 edition of *The Spiritualist* announces the results of the long investigation of the Dialectical Society of London, which began two years earlier an investigation of the spooky phenomena reported around this time. We read this quote from the report of the Society (which can be read here in the full published report):

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

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- Head Truth
- Orb Pro

""Since their appointment on the 16th of February, 1869, your Sub-committee have held forty meetings for the purpose of experiment and test.

All of these meetings were held at the private residences of members of the Committee, purposely to preclude the possibility of pre-arranged mechanism or contrivance.

The furniture of the room in which the experiments were conducted was on every occasion its accustomed furniture. The tables were in all cases heavy dining tables, requiring a strong effort to move them. The smallest of them was 5ft. 9in. long by 4ft. wide, and the largest, 9ft. 3in. long and 4 ft. wide, and of proportionate weight.

The rooms, tables, and furniture generally were repeatedly subjected to careful examination before, during, and after the experiments, to ascertain that no concealed machinery, instrument, or other contrivance existed by means of which the sounds or movements hereinafter mentioned could be caused.

The experiments were conducted in the light of gas, except on the few occasions specially noted in the minutes. ...Every test that the combined intelligence of your Committee could devise has been tried with patience and perseverance. The experiments were conducted under a great variety of conditions, and ingenuity has been exerted in devising plans by which your Committee might verify their observations and preclude the possibility of imposture or of delusion....

The result of their long-continued and carefully-conducted experiments, after trial by every detective test they could devise, has been to establish conclusively :

First: That under certain bodily or mental conditions of one or more of the persons present, a force is exhibited sufficient to set in motion heavy substances, without the employment of any muscular force, without contact or material connection of any kind between such substances and the body of any person present.

Second: That this force can cause sounds to

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Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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- age of universe (3)
- aging (2)
- AI (1)
- alien abductions (2)
- alien attack (1)
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

proceed, distinctly audible to all present, from solid substances not in contact with, nor having any visible or material connection with, the body of any person present, and which sounds are proved to proceed from such substances by the vibrations which are distinctly felt when they are touched.

Third : That this force is frequently directed by intelligence.

At thirty-four out of the forty meetings of your Committee some of these phenomena occurred....

In all similar experiments the possibility of mechanical or other contrivance was further negatived by the fact that the movements were in various directions, now to one side, then to the other ; now up the room, now down the room — motions that would have required the co-operation of many hands or feet ; and these, from the great size and weight of the tables, could not have been so used without the visible exercise of muscular force. Every hand and foot was plainly to be seen and could not have been moved without instant detection.

Delusion was out of the question. The motions were in various directions, and were witnessed simultaneously by all present. They were matters of measurement, and not of opinion or of fancy.

And they occurred so often, under so many and such various conditions, with such safeguards against error or deception, and with such invariable results, as to satisfy the members of your Sub-committee by whom the experiments were tried, wholly sceptical as most of them were when they entered upon the investigation, that there is a force capable of moving heavy bodies without material contact and which force is in some unknown manner dependent upon the presence of human beings."

The same October 15, 1871 edition of *The Spiritualist* announces these results of the long investigation of the Dialectical Society of London (which can also be read on this page of the full report):

"These reports, hereto subjoined, substantially corroborate each other, and would appear to establish the following propositions : —

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
- anthropic principle (22)
- antimatter (3)
- apocalypse (5)
- apparition (76)
- apparition acting like a death notification (22)
- apparition of the living (6)
- apparition seen by multiple witnesses (16)
- apports (5)
- aquatic mega-patternization (1)
- archaeology (1)
- argument against brain storage of all memories (20)
- argument for soul (17)
- argument from evil (3)
- Artemis (1)
- artificial intelligence (7)
- artificial planets (1)
- artificial worlds (1)
- asteroid mining (1)
- asteroids (1)
- astral projection (1)
- astrobiology (2)
- astroengineering (3)
- astronomy (14)
- atheism (3)
- augmented reality (2)
- aura (1)
- austerity (1)
- Australian mystery lights (1)
- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

1. — That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room — the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch — occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance.
2. — That movements of heavy bodies take place with- out mechanical contrivance of any kind or adequate exertion of muscular force by the persons present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person.
3. — That these sounds and movements often occur at the times and in the manner asked for by persons present, and, by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications .
4. — That the answers and communications thus obtained are, for the most part, of a common- place character ; but facts are sometimes correctly given which are only known to one of the persons present.
5. — That the circumstances under which the phenomena occur are variable, the most prominent fact being, that the presence of certain persons seems necessary to their occurrence, and that of others generally adverse ; but this difference does not appear to depend upon any belief or disbelief concerning the phenomena.
6. — That, nevertheless, the occurrence of the phenomena is not insured by the presence or absence of such persons respectively."

The same October 15, 1971 edition of *The Spiritualist* announces these results of the long investigation of the Dialectical Society of London (the same quote can be found here in the full report):

"*1. Thirteen witnesses state that they have seen heavy bodies — in some instances men — rise slowly in the air and remain there for sometime without visible or tangible support.*
2. — Fourteen witnesses testify to having seen hands or figures, not appertaining to any human being, but life-like in appearance and mobility, which they have sometimes touched or even grasped, and which they are therefore convinced were not the result of imposture or illusion.
3. — Five witnesses state that they have been touched, by some invisible agency, on various parts of the body, and often where requested, when the hands of all present were visible.
4. — Thirteen witnesses declare that they have heard musical pieces well played upon instruments not manipulated by any ascertainable agency.
5. — Five witnesses state that they have seen red-hot coals applied to the hands or heads of several - persons without producing pain or scorching ; and three witnesses state that

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

they have had the same experiment made upon themselves with the like immunity.
6 — Eight witnesses state that they have received precise information through rappings, writings, and in other ways, the accuracy of which was unknown at the time to themselves or to any persons present, and which, on subsequent inquiry, was found to be correct.
7. — One witness declares that he has received a precise and detailed statement which, nevertheless, proved to be entirely erroneous.
8. — Three witnesses state that they have been present when drawings, both in pencil and colours, were produced in so short a time, and under such conditions, as to render human agency impossible.
9. — Six witnesses declare that they have received information of future events, and that in some cases the hour and minute of their occurrence have been accurately foretold, days and even weeks before."

The full report (running to 400 pages) was published in book form in 1871, and can be read here. Here is one of innumerable similar testimonies that can be found in the report:

*"Mrs. Honywood, in answer to a request from the chair, stated that she had witnessed some remarkable phenomena at the residence of Dr. Gully, 'While sitting in a circle recently, the table rose, and the room vibrated to such a degree that an engineer who was present declared that nothing but the strongest machinery would have been sufficient to account for it. **An accordion was played in the air, Mr. Home holding it by one strap, and not touching it in any other way. The room was fully lighted. Three or four persons, unknown to Mr. Home, mentally wished for particular tunes and they were played**.' "*

Here is another one of the testimonies given to the committee, by some distinguished person who apparently wanted to remain anonymous:

*"The Hon. Mrs. --- gave evidence in the following words : — ' The most remarkable manifestations I have seen, were those of last Sunday evening at my house. We were seated in a partially darkened room. We first heard raps and then saw a human figure at the window. It entered and several other figures came trooping in after it. One of them waived its hands. **The atmosphere became fearfully cold. A figure which I recognised as that of a deceased relative, came behind my chair, leaned over me, and brushed my***

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

hair lightly with its hand. It seemed about eight feet high. Then approaching the Master of Lindsay it passed right through him, causing him to shiver with cold. *But the most extraordinary thing of all was the laughter. One of us said something and all the spirits laughed with joy. The sound was indescribably strange, and it appeared to us as if it came from the ground. This was the first time we heard spirit voices.' "*

The witness then tells us this occurred in the presence of "Mr. Home," apparently Daniel Dunglas Home.

The Times of London is one of the world's oldest newspapers, having operated since the 18th century. In the December 26, 1872 edition of *The Times* (quoted on page 51 of the early 1873 source here), we had a perfect example of how mainstream sources engage in shameless lies when writing about the paranormal. The paper claimed this about the 400-page report of The Dialectical Society of London:

"The Report filled altogether some 400 pages, and the sum total of 18 months' investigation amounted to just this, that— 'Your Committee, taking into consideration the high character and great intelligence of many of the witnesses to the more extraordinary facts, the extent to which their testimony is supported by the reports of the sub-committees and the absence of any proof of imposture or delusion as regards a large portion of the phenomena; and, further, having regard to the exceptional character of the phenomena, the large number of persons in every grade of society and over the whole civilized world who are more or less influenced by a belief in their supernatural origin, and to the fact that no philosophical explanation of them has yet been arrived at, deem it incumbent upon them to state their conviction that the subject is worthy of more serious attention and careful investigation than it has hitherto received.' "

The claim of *The Times* that the "the sum total of 18 months' investigation amounted to just this," merely that the phenomena were "worthy of more serious attention" was a brazen deceit by *The Times* writer, as it is obvious from the quotes above that conclusions far beyond that were made all over the place in the report, with the 400-page report documenting countless testimonies of people witnessing dramatic paranormal events, and the writers of the report concluding that various types of dramatic paranormal events were observational facts. Such malfeasance by mainstream newspapers continued for 150 years, with major papers

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

called *The Times* (such as the New York Times) continuing to have appalling records of distortion and misrepresentation and censorship when reporting on the paranormal (as I document here).

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

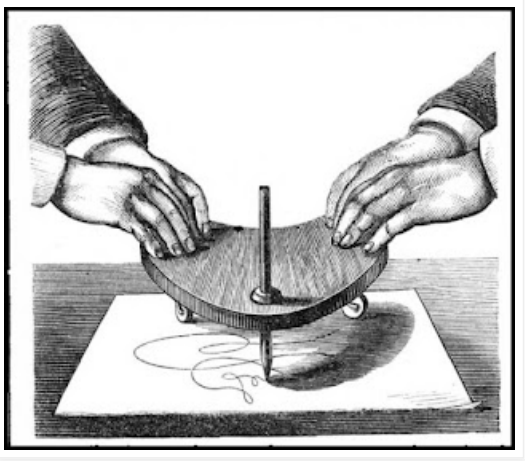
Labels: levitation, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism, teleportation

Monday, December 11, 2023

Spookiest Years Part 8: The Years 1868-1869

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1861. In this installment I will look at accounts of spooky events occurring during the years 1868 and 1869.

Around the year 1868 we had increasing use of an invention called the planchette that was used to try to receive mysterious communications. The planchette was a predecessor of the Ouija board, and used for similar purposes. A surprisingly fair article in the July 8, 1868 edition of *Scientific American* deals with this device, and has the drawing below of a planchette:



The planchette had two little wheels and a hole through which someone would put a pencil. Two people would put their fingers on it, and see whether any writing or drawing resulted. The *Scientific American* article says this:

"The instrument is usually operated by two persons, or perhaps we should say it generally operates when two persons lay the tips of their fingers gently upon it. Occasionally it operates with less force when only one places his hands upon it...The phenomena attributed to the Planchette are various, but they consist essentially in writing and drawing. The latter we have never witnessed, but we state it upon good authority. In fact, the

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

wonders of Planchette are backed by the statements of the most reliable people — statements which constitute such a mass of evidence that we should feel bound to accept the facts stated, even though we had not witnessed them ourselves.

You may hold a conversation with Planchette, provided your own part in it consists of interrogations. Its replies, so far as we have seen, are sometimes true and sometimes false. So are the replies often given by human respondents. It sometimes refuses to write at all, and plays the most fantastic tricks, in apparently willful disregard of the feelings of those who are anxious that it should do its best. When, however, it chooses to be good, it moves gently and steadily over the paper upon which it is placed, the pencil point tracing letter after letter, until the reply is written, when with a rapid sweep it announces its conclusion by rushing swiftly back to the left, and stopping suddenly at the edge of the paper. These motions seem to those whose fingers rest upon the board to be entirely independent of their own wills, their only care being to avoid any resistance to its motions. The fact that it is impossible to suppose that the wills of two persons could be by their own desire mutually coincident, without previously concerted action, forms one of the most puzzling features of the subject, as the nature of the questions asked and answered precludes the possibility of collusion."

The article then ends with a little paragraph suggesting that the topic was worthy of further study, without offering any explanation for the observed phenomenon.

Epes Sargent's 1869 book *Planchette* has this account from 1869 (the references to "Hon. --- ---" refer to Lord Lindsay, quoted below, and the references to Mr. Home refer to Daniel Dunglas Home):

"A man of science, Mr. Jencken (see page 100), communicates to the public, under date of January, 1869, a statement that, at a recent meeting of several gentlemen, at Ashley House, London (all of whom are ready to verify this account), Mr. Home was lifted by some unknown force four feet off the ground. Travelling thus, suspended in space, he made a circuit round those in the room. ***The levitation lasted from four to five minutes.*** *His trance state changing, Mr. Home opened the door and went into the corridor. A voice then said, 'He will go out of this window and come in at that window.' The only one who heard the voice was the Hon. --- ---; and he shuddered at the thought of a feat which the great height of the third-floor windows rendered more than ordinarily perilous. The others present, however, having closely questioned him as to what he had heard, he at first replied, 'I dare not tell you; ' when, to the amazement of all, a voice said, 'You must tell; tell directly.' The*

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

Hon. --- --- then said, 'Yes, yes! terrible to say, he will go out at that window and come in at this; do not be frightened, be quiet.' Mr. Home now re-entered the room, and opening the drawing-room window, was pushed out demi-horizontally into space, and carried from one window of the drawing-room to the furthermost window of the adjoining room. This feat being performed at a height of about eighty feet from the ground, naturally caused a shudder in all present."

This is one of history's most astonishing accounts: an account of a man levitating into the air for minutes, and then floating out a window about eighty feet above the ground, and then floating back in to the same building through a nearby high window. A matching account of this incident was given by Lord Lindsay, who testified this to the investigative committee of the London Dialectical Society:

"I saw the levitations in Victoria Street, when Home floated out of the window ; he first went into a trance and walked about uneasily; he then went into the hall ; while he was away, I heard a voice whisper in my ear, ' He will go out of one window and in at another.' I was alarmed and shocked at the idea of so dangerous an experiment. I told the company what I had heard, and we then waited for Home's return. Shortly after he entered the room, I heard the window go up, but I could not see it, for I sat with my back to it. I, however, saw his shadow on the opposite wall ; he went out of the window in a horizontal position, and I saw him outside the other window (that in the next room) floating in the air. It was eighty-five feet from the ground. There was no balcony along the windows, merely a strong course an inch and a-half wide ; each window had a small plant stand, but there was no connection between them. I have no theory to explain these things. I have tried to find out how they are done, but the more I studied them, the more satisfied was I that they could not be explained by mere mechanical trick. I have had the fullest opportunity for investigation. I once saw Home floating in space."

Alfred Russel Wallace (co-founder of the theory of evolution) stated the following about reports of levitation:

"A few well-known examples are those of St. Francis d'Assisi, who was often seen by many persons to rise in the air, and the fact is testified by his secretary, who could only reach his feet. St. Theresa, a nun in a convent in Spain, was often raised into the air in the sight of all the sisterhood. Lord Orrery and Mr. Valentine Greatrak both informed Dr. Henry More and Mr. Glanvil that at Lord Conway's house at Eagley, in Ireland, a gentleman's butler, in their presence and in broad daylight, rose into the air and floated about the room above their heads. This is

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

related by Glanvil in his Sadducismus Triumphatus. A similar fact is related by eye-witnesses of Ignatius de Loyola ; and Mr. Madden, in his life of Savonarola, after narrating a similar circumstance of that saint, remarks, that similar phenomena are related in numerous instances, and that the evidence upon which some of the narratives rest is as reliable as any human testimony can be. Butler, in his Lives of the Saints, says that many such facts are related by persons of undoubted veracity, who testify that they themselves were eye-witnesses of them. So we all know that at least fifty persons of high character may be found in London who will testify that they have seen the same thing happen to Mr. Home."

The February 1868 edition of the publication *Human Nature* has an account by an author claiming to have witnessed very astonishing phenomena in the presence of Daniel Dunglas Home. On pages 28-29 we read that an accordion played while suspended in the air, and that a semigrand piano was lifted "bodily off of the ground." We read, "This I have remarked on many occasions; also that the table is generally bodily raised into the air, not tilted, and I have seen instances where the table remained suspended in the air three to four minutes." We read this on page 30:

"Mr Home said, ' I am now going to grow taller' and then the remarkable phenomenon of elongation was witnessed. The elongation repeated itself three times. The first time, Mr Home lengthened to about 6ft. 9 in.; then he shortened down below his normal height to about five feet. He then asked me to hold his feet, which I did by planting my foot on his instep, whilst Mr ------held his head, his left hand being placed on his left shoulder. We carefully measured the extent of elongation against the wall; it showed eight inches. M r------, who had been watching the extension at the waist, measured six inches elongation!...Mr Home had now seated himself. Again he said, ' I am going to be elongated. Daniel will be elongated thirty times during his life : this is the sixth time ' (?) M r s-------, who sat next to Mr Home, placed her hand on his head, and her feet on his feet. Thus held, the elongation nevertheless proceeded, measuring six inches. I repeat, Mr Home was seated all the time, and held by those present, anxious to verify this truly unaccountable phenomenon. By this time Mr Home had awakened from his trance."

Although a very interesting tale, this is not first-class evidence of the paranormal because of the failure to list the name of the witnesses, and the fact that the account is written under a pen name of Honestas. But in a later edition of the *Human Nature* journal (the March 1869 edition) we have a named witness who gives a similar report of a paranormal elongation of Daniel

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

Dunglas Home. We read this on page 139, an account written by H. D. Jencken:

"Our circle, consisting in all of seven, met as usual at tea. During the whole of the time we were seated at the tea-table, raps were heard close to the mantelpiece, and the chair behind the friend who was seated next to me trembled and moved. On reseating ourselves in the drawing-room, ***a cold current of air was felt to pass over our hands ; the floor vibrated, and the table tilted, moved, and finally was raised into the air, remaining suspended in space for nearly a minute,*** *as if balanced, if I may use the comparison, upon a cushion of steam. The semigrand [piano] then moved spontaneously from the wall into the room, and raps and a tremulous vibration-movement of the instrument were noticed....****The right leg of Mr Home was then elongated about six inches, then shortened, the foot literally shrinking into the trouser.*** *I carefully examined the leg from the ankle joint to the hip. The limb felt shrunk and withered, and, gradually elongating, it felt as if it were being expanded by air being inflated. Whilst the leg was so shortened, he walked about the room, proving, that though lessened in size, the function of the limb was unimpaired. The final and most satisfactory test was, however, the lengthening and shortening of the hand. Of this extraordinary phenomenon I have given a sketch or tracing made at the time, and, as the weight of the testimony depends much upon the accuracy of the tracing taken, I will describe my method in making the outline. I caused Mr Home to place his hand firmly on a sheet of paper, and then carefully traced an outline of the hand. At the wrist joint I placed a pencil against the ' trapezium,' a small bone at the end of phalange of the thumb. The hand gradually widened and elongated about an inch, then contracted and shortened about an inch. At each stage I made a tracing of the hand, causing the pencil point to be firmly kept at the wrist. The fact of the elongating and contracting of the hand I unmistakably established, and, be the cause what it may, the fact remains ; and in giving the result of my measurements, and the method adopted to satisfy myself that I had not been self- deceived, I am, I believe, rendering the first positive measurement of the extension and contraction of a human organism. Mr Home now resumed his seat, and awoke from his trance, exhausted and feverish. These phenomena took place in a well-lighted room."*

The same Honestas referred to above makes this astounding report in the May 1868 edition of *Human Nature* (page 194), involving a seance with Daniel Dunglas Home:

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

"We next suggested trying the alternating weight and lightness of the table, a manifestation occasionally produced. M r----- reexamined the table to satisfy him self that no disturbing cause could interfere; this done, we made the request to have the table ' heavy.' On attempting to raise it, we could not possibly manage to lift it. Then we requested that the table should be made ' light,' and the table only just before heavy and immovable, could now be raised upon the slightest effort. Mr— , satisfied with this test, suggested repeating the experiment with the music book, which had been placed on rollers on the table. I at first quite doubted the result, but on trying to raise the edge of the book it felt as if cleaved to the table, and then on changing to, ' Let it be light,' the book became as light as a feather. Again and again we repeated the experiment, and finally satisfied ourselves of the reality of the important fact of an independent agency, guided by intelligence, and of the presence of an invisible being, possessing the power of reading our thoughts, and of producing at will the phenomenon of alternately making the book heavy or light."

If there were no further corroboration of this outrageous-sounding claim about a paranormal change in the weight of bodies, we might be entitled to dismiss it, on the grounds that we have no fully named witness, but merely a witness using the pen name of Honestas. But in this case we have a very strong corroboration of the report. Within a few years the eminent scientist Sir William Crookes would publish his "Experimental Investigation of Psychic Force," which would state this:

"Among the remarkable phenomena which occur under Mr. Home's influence, the most striking, as well as the most easily tested with scientific accuracy, are — (i) the alteration in the weight of bodies, and (2) the playing of tunes upon musical instruments (generally an accordion, for convenience of portability) without direct human intervention, under conditions rendering contact or connection with the keys impossible. Not until I had witnessed these facts some half-dozen times, and scrutinised them with all the critical acumen I possess, did I become convinced of their objective reality. Still, desiring to place the matter beyond the shadow of doubt, I invited Mr. Home on several occasions to come to my own house, where, in the presence of a few scientific enquirers, these phenomena could be submitted to crucial experiments. The meetings took place in the evening, in a large room lighted by gas."

On the page here Crookes tells how he very carefully verified the inexplicable effect of a paranormal alteration in the weight of objects, using some fancy equipment he devised. We can surely trust one of the most accomplished physicists of the 19th

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

century to have correctly handled the elementary task of correctly weighing simple objects.

The year 1869 saw the case of the trial of William F. Mumler on charges of faking "spirit photographs." Mumler would take photographs, typically of strangers. The photographs would often seem to show figures who never appeared during the photographic session. Often when presented with such a photograph, someone might say the figure matched or appeared some deceased person known to him. Nowadays such images can easily be produced by computer software, but in the 1860's there was no known way of producing such images without some elaborate artistic process that would take quite a while and be easily detectable by anyone watching the photographer. Witnesses would often say they watched Mumler at work, seeing no signs of anything special going on before the appearance of such enigmatic images.

It was a disgrace that Mumler was ever put on trial for fraud, as there never existed any *prima facie* evidence of a fraud. The trial quickly showed how weak the prosecution's case was. You can read here a newspaper account of the early testimony. The prosecution's main witness was Joseph A. Tooker, who witnessed no deceptive photography activity, and whose claim of fraud was based on this claim:

"They promised to give me a portrait or picture of a deceased relative, or of one nearest in sympathy with me: they did not do it. I was therefore deceived."

Getting a photo that does not match what was promised may be grounds for a refund, but is not a basis for a fraud arrest.

A judge found Mumler not guilty of the charges after a three-week trial. Examples of Mumler's photographs can be seen on this page. Below is one of his photos.

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

In the text of the *Harper's Magazine* article, we read this:

"The counsel for the defense have brought forward a number of witnesses who testify to the genuineness of spiritual photographs taken for them by Mr. Mumler. William P. Sneed, a photographer of Pougheepsie, testifies that Mumler succeeded in producing spiritual photographs at his gallery in Poughkeepsie, and he was unable to discover how it was done. Judge Edmonds, one of the most distinguished advocates of Spiritualism, deposed that he had two photographs taken by Mumler; the spirit form in one of them he thought he could recognize, but not the one in the other.... A large number of witnesses testified that they recognized the faces of departed friends (in some cases of those long dead) in the photographs taken for them by Mumler. The most striking case was that of a gentleman of Wall Street, whose deceased wife's features both he and his friends distinctly recognized in a photograph taken for him in this way. If there is a trick in Mr. Mumler's process it has certainly not been discovered as yet."

No one ever showed that Mumler was guilty of fraud. The treatment of him in the press and by skeptics is a classic example of groundless libel so often practiced by the mainstream when dealing with the paranormal. Many witnesses stated that they had observed Mumler's entire activity during the production of photos with mysterious figures, and that they had seen no evidence of fraud. For example, in the January 1, 1863 edition of *The Spiritual Magazine,* page 34, we read this:

"As I have been commissioned bv Messrs. A . J. Davis and Co., you can rest assured that I was resolved, if permitted, to allow

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

nothing to slip my utmost scrutiny. Having had ten years' continual practice in this particular branch— that is, negative on glass, and positive on paper from negative— I felt competent to detect any form of deception. Having been permitted by Mr. Mumler every facility to investigate, I went through the whole of the operation of selecting, cleaning, preparing, coating, silvering, and putting into the shield, the glass upon which Mr. M. proposed that a spirit form and mine should be imparted, never taking oft' my eyes, and not allowing Mr. M. to touch the glass until it had gone through the whole of the operation. The result was, that there came upon the glass a picture of myself and, to my utter astonishment— having previously examined and scrutinized every crack and corner, plate-holder, camera, box, tube, the inside of the bath, &c.—another portrait. Having since continued, on several occasions, my investigations, as described above, and received even more perfect results than on the first trial, I have been obliged to endorse its legitimacy.

Respectfully yours, W m . Guay ."

Guay then states that he recognized images of his father and mother on photos taken by Mumler, and that "it is impossible for Mr. Mumler to have procured any pictures of my wife or father." On page 35 we also read this:

"Another photographic artist, Mr. II. Weston, of 31, Province street, Boston, writes that after making a full examination of the process, he found a spirit-figure on the negative. He also says that he cannot conceive of any process by which imitations could be made without his detection."

There follows in the same article quite a bit of similar testimony from other people. We have three hard-to-explain aspects in the Mumler and quite a few similar cases of this time:

(1) The appearance in mid-nineteenth-century photos of ghostly figures that could not have been produced at such a time except through some elaborate fakery process requiring very substantial time and work, such as manually painting on a photographic plate.

(2) The testimony of quite a few witnesses that they observed Mumler's operation when some mysterious figures appeared in his photos, and saw no evidence of any such work, and no evidence of anything unusual.

(3) The mysterious appearance of figures in photographs of someone, with that person recognizing the figure as a deceased relative, even though Mumler had no knowledge of the appearance of such a deceased relative. Some examples are here.

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

In the November 1869 edition of *Human Nature* (page 563), we hear this remarkable account:

"Mrs. Bowcroft stated that in July, 1860, she had seen the apparition of her husband. ' I was lying,' she said, ' on the sofa, at about six and seven o'clock in the evening, perfectly awake, and not thinking at all about my husband, when I heard three distinct knocks at the door. Thinking it must be one of the waiters, I said 'Come in,' and my husband, who had been dead five years, entered, dressed in the morning dress prescribed for British consuls —a blue coat, with Victoria buttons, a straw-coloured waistcoat, and a white hat, such as he always used to wear in the summer. He had also a walking stick with a chamois-horn handle. I jumped up and advanced towards him. He then went into the next room ; and when I had recovered myself sufficiently to follow him, he was gone.' In answer to questions, the lady stated that she was unable to say how long the apparition lasted ; she had every reason to believe that her husband was poisoned on board a ship; the door actually opened when she said 'Come in'; the door was not open when the apparition disappeared."

On page 619 of the December 1869 edition of *Human Nature*, we hear this testimony from some British figure with the title of the Master of Lindsay, regarding Daniel Dunglas Home:

"*A few minutes after I saw an apparition, which seemed like a cloud of vapour or an indistinct shadow, which grew gradually into a definite shape, and I saw the form of a woman standing en profile to me. She stood between me and Home; I saw the features plainly, and should have recognised them again anywhere. She seemed to be attired in a long flowing gown, which hung without belt from the shoulders. The figure seemed quite solid; I could not see through it. I spoke to Home; he said he saw her plainly, and that it was the apparition of his late wife, who often came to him. She moved and stood by his side ; she then walked to the right of the bed and rather behind it, but not out of my sight, and then slowly faded away like a column of vapour. The next morning I found an album, and on looking over the pictures carelessly I saw a photograph exactly like the figure I had seen. Edward Jencken said it was the likeness of the late Mrs. Home. When I saw the apparition I remarked that Home's eyes shone in the dark with a very singular lustre."*

Posted by Mark Mahin at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, levitation, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, spirit photography, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

Spookiest Years, Part 7: The Years 1860-1861

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1855. Let me pick up the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in 1860 and 1861.

Between 1860 and 1861 slavery in the US was near its end that would occur in 1865, and among those helping to bring its downfall were the newspapers reporting paranormal phenomena. The January 21, 1860 edition of *The Spiritual Telegraph* strongly denounced slavery on page 458.

In an 1861 book we hear these remarkable claims:

"I spent the evening at Judge Edmund's house, and was introduced to his daughter, Miss Laura Edmonds, his soul companion. Both are cheerful, very genial, and interesting persons. Miss Edmond's health is very delicate, and for that reason the exercise of her remarkable mediumship is not now encouraged. Her gifts are various : she is a writing medium ; and the spirits speak through her in the trance state; she sees spirits in her normal condition ; and ***she can sometimes at will project her spirit : appearing in form and delivering messages to friends in sympathy with her, even though living at a distance — in proof of which she cited two or three instances.*** *The power of the spirit to leave the natural body and to present itself in visible form and identity to another, though rare, is not an attribute of Miss Edmonds' mediumship only; as I am acquainted with a lady resident in London who has the same power, and who has exercised it several times, This lady told me that on one occasion having a young friend staying on a visit with her, a gentleman who called to see them, in the course of conversation ridiculed the belief in apparitions, and said that he would give anything to see a ghost. He laughed at her assertion that her spirit could appear to him that very night if he pleased, and dared her to try it, which she agreed to do. In the course of the night, she told her friend that she had been to Mr. ----'s bedside, and that finding him asleep, she awoke him by a box on his ear; and then, after repeating to him a verse from a poem of Keat's, came away. The gentleman called on the ladies early on the following morning, corroborated her statement, and acknowledged himself perforce a convert at all events to that phase of spiritual manifestations."*

On another page the author becomes one of very many who claimed the most astonishing auditory manifestations around Catherine Fox (the same as Kate Fox). Describing a method by which a person calls out the alphabet and waits for raps, writing down the letters followed by raps, he states this:

"The rappings in her presence are very loud and precise. When I called on her one morning, the room resounded on all sides as if a host were giving me a joyous welcome. I asked if the spirits who were present would give us their names, and the names of Harry, Isabel, and Sylvester were spelt out, no names having been mentioned by me in Miss Fox's presence, and of course I and my family relations were wholly unknown to her. These were followed by other names of friends, spelt out in full, and one, a relative of my wife's said, 'Let me speak.' A message followed, of a specially significant and touching character, which I am precluded from giving, as it relates to private family affairs; but I may mention that the tenor of the message is an actual apology offered for an assumed injustice done to me during her life-time, now 20 years ago."

Many distinguished witnesses gave similar reports testifying to the most inexplicable auditory phenomena occurring from a great variety of different directions and objects when Kate Fox (Catherine Fox) was nearby. For example, in 1874 in a scientific paper the world-class scientist William Crookes stated this:

"These sounds are noticed with almost every medium, each having a special peculiarity; they are more varied with Mr. Home, but for power and certainty I have met with no one who at all approached Miss Kate Fox. For several months I enjoyed almost unlimited opportunity of testing the various phenomena occurring in the presence of this lady, and I especially examined the phenomena of these sounds. With mediums, generally, it is necessary to sit for a formal séance before anything is heard; but, in the case of Miss Fox it seems only necessary for her to place her hand on any substance for loud thuds to be heard in it, like a triple pulsation, sometimes loud enough to be heard several rooms off. In this manner I have heard them in a living tree—on a sheet of glass—on a stretched iron wire—on a stretched membrane—a tambourine—on the roof of a cab—and on the floor of a theatre. Moreover, actual contact is not always necessary; I have had these sounds proceeding from the floor, walls, &c., when the medium's hands and feet were held—when she was standing on a chair—when she was suspended in a swing from the ceiling—when she was enclosed in a wire cage—and when she had fallen fainting on a sofa. I have heard them on a glass harmonicon—I have felt them on my own shoulder and under my own hands. I have heard them on a sheet of paper, held between the fingers by a piece of thread passed through one corner. With a full knowledge of the numerous theories which have been started, chiefly in America, to explain these sounds, I have tested them in every way that I could devise, until there has been no escape from the conviction that

they were true objective occurrences not produced by trickery or mechanical means."

See the quote here and the next several pages for identical testimony by a former US congressman, who testified to hearing such inexplicable noises in a huge variety of places, coming from many different directions and different objects, particularly whenever Kate Fox was around. On the page here, that congressman says that Kate Fox was "one of the most simple-minded" persons he had ever met, and that she was "as incapable of framing, or carrying on, any deliberate scheme of imposition as a ten year-old child is of administering a government." See the last few paragraphs of my post here for an 1855 account by Susanna Moodie of similar wonders occurring when she visited Kate Fox, including Kate identifying very specific names, dates and facts known to Moodie but unknown to Kate (an account similar to the one quoted above about Kate Fox). The evidence for paranormal effects around Kate Fox is overwhelming, and comes from numerous corroborating witnesses (some very distinguished) who give very similar reports in different years of seeing and hearing effects around Kate Fox that no magician of her time could have produced.

An 1861 speech by Thomas Pallister Barkas to a large audience made these startling claims about things that happened in the previous dozen years:

"In an incredibly short space of time, the manifestations increased in number and variety ; and in addition to those which consisted merely of responses to questions produced by tables rising and rapping on the floor, to indicate letters pointed out on the alphabet, or expressed viva voce *there occurred knockings on the tables, chairs, floors, and walls of the rooms... the knockings being heard in places quite beyond the reach of any one present. The rising of tables entirely from the floor, and the dancing of the same in the air, the hands of the operators being on the tops of the tables ; ringing of bells ; dotting of handkerchiefs ; pulling of clothes ; pinching of the bodies of those in the rooms ; tables, chairs...moving without contact, and quite beyond the influence of mediums and spectators; writing automatically by mediums; independent spirit writings, — no visible person or thing touching either pencil or paper ; music played on guitars, concertinas, pianos, &c. — no one touching the keys or strings of the instruments ; appearances of spirit hands, such hands occasionally shaking those of the persons forming the circles; spirit drawing, by automatic action, through mediums ; trance, and impressional speaking ; ponderous bodies, such, for example, as tables and chairs, floating in the air, — and not only without any visible person or agent aiding their flight, but when full grown men sat down*

upon them, for the purpose of preventing their movements, — on several occasions tables, chairs, and men have floated about the rooms : spelling out the names of long series of persons living in this world, and those who have departed to the spirit world ; forwarding of communications to very distant places, and almost immediately returning with messages that weeks after have been verified ; — these, and myriads of other occurrences, have taken place without any mechanical contrivance or collusion, and under every variety of circumstances, — the great majority of the mediums being private and unprofessional. These extraordinary phenomena continue of frequent occurrence in all the States of America."

*I*n the January 21, 1860 edition of *Banner of Light*, we hear an account by J. W. Hitchcock M.D. of apparition sightings in Terre Haute, Indiana. We read this account of a Mr. H. seeing apparitions in his house:

"He saw three men standing near the middle of the floor. It was a bright moonlight night, and sufficient light was admitted into the room by three large windows on the south and west sides. The men were engaged in earnest conversation, and he heard their voice, but could not distinguish what was said. Supposing, very naturally, that they were there for no good purpose, and, of course, fully prepared for offense or defense, Mr. H. felt that his situation was anything but agreeable; however, before he had resolved what to say or do, ***the three figures faded away****, and he neither saw nor heard them again."*

The same account tells us this:

"Mr. B. had his attention called to unaccountable noises in the back part of the house, and going thither to look to the matter, he saw a man come out of the cellar-way, and stood facing him within a few feet. Before he had recovered from his surprise, ***the apparition melted away.****"*

On page 3 of the March 17, 1860 edition of *Banner of Light*, we have this remarkable account of sleepwalking (somnambulism):

"An extraordinary instance of somnambulism occurred in Stamford, shortly after midnight, on Monday last. About one o'clock, Sergeant Harrison, while on duty at the lock-up, observed a person, clothed in white, walking toward St. Paul street. Supposing it to be some one who had assumed a disguise for the purpose of playing a joke, he walked up to the individual, whom he found to be the wife of Mr, J. Oliver, cabinet-maker, having nothing on but her night-dress. She was walking about with her eyes wide open, apparently awake, but in reality in a state of perfect somnambulism. She was taken to her home, which was close at hand, and her husband aroused, by whom

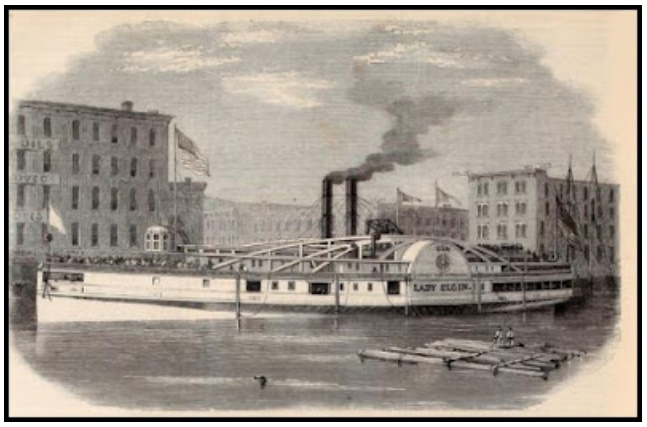
she was placed in bed. It appears that she got up, walked down stairs, unlocked the front door, and went into the street, without either disturbing her husband or arousing herself; nor was she conscious of what had taken place when she awoke in the morning. But the most remarkable feature in this case is, that, ***although she had been unable to walk without crutches or assistance for the last year or two, she was, when discovered, walking as well as any other person, and without either the support of the wall or a crutch****."*

On page 6 of the March 24, 1860 edition of *Banner of Light*, we have a story called "A Dead Woman Brought to Life," told by D. M. Lapham of Springfield, Illinois. He tells us this:

"*Mrs. D.R. Judkins (medium) has the written certificates of persons who were present on the occasion, testifying to the truth of the following: A woman came to this city, last spring. Her name was Elizabeth Cordell. Soon after arriving here she was taken very sick. One night, about nine o'clock, the girl who had been attending her went to the house of Mrs. D. R. Judkins, and told her the woman was dead, and asked her if she would go and help lay out the corpse. Mrs. J. said she would willingly do so. Arriving at the house, she found several persons congregated in the room. They said she had been dead about one half hour. As soon as Mrs. J. stepped into the room, she felt the power of the spirit with her, and was immediately controlled to make three passes from the head to the feet of the inanimate form before her, then took the hands in her own for a short time, when they became lifelike and limber. The medium's hands were then raised above her head, and brought together with a quick, sharp slap, accompanying the act with the words, 'Come out;' when, strange and miraculous as it may seem, the eyes were thrown open, She began to breathe and talk, and from that time gradually recovered her usual health. There were some half dozen persons present, who had examined the condition of the body, and pronounced it dead. The names of three witnesses of this manifestation are: Wm Trow, A. T. Wilkins, Julia A. Trow. These persons all live in this city.*"

The *Lady Elgin* was a steamship which was "rammed in a gale by the schooner Augusta in the early hours of September 8, 1860." The ship sunk in Lake Michigan with the loss of about 300 people, according to the article here. On page 4 of the September 29, 1860 edition of *Banner of Light*, we read a quotation from the Columbus State Journal speaking of some paranormal events related to this disaster. We get this quotation:

"In Milwaukee, on the morning of the disaster, and about the very hour of its occurrence, the Chief of Police was awakened from sleep by the sense of a terrible calamity, so that he rose and visited all the police stations of the city, to see that nothing should happen which his care could avert, and at daylight returned to bis room with the same vague yet fearful presentiment depressing him. When he arose again at nine, the news of the wreck had thrilled the whole city. During the night, a lady whose husband was lost on the Elgin, was warned of his death in a dream. The wife of Capt. Barry dreamed that she saw the Elgin wrecked and her husband sink, as actually befell. A lady, who had no friends on the ill-fated vessel, awoke in the night with the feeling that, as she expressed it, 'something dreadful was happening,' and was so wrought upon by terror that she could not sleep again, and rose and waited till the news of the catastrophe interpreted her forebodings. A mother who was lost gave her child in charge of a friend before going upon the excursion, with the injunction to place it with the Sisters of Mercy if she should not return. This request was, made playfully, as if the mother attached no particular importance to it; at the same time she would not leave until she had exacted a solemn promise to that effect."



The Lady Elgin, which sunk with about 300 dead

On page 6 of the October 13, 1860 edition of the *Banner of Light*, we read this:

"The Schenectady News vouches for the truth of the following:— 'A very remarkable case of presentiment, bordering on the supernatural, has just been told us by a gentleman nearly related to the persons concerned. Mr. W----- .... about three weeks ago, was awakened from his sleep by au unusual noise, which he thought proceeded from the adjoining room. More surprised than alarmed, he lighted a candle and went into the apartment, which was used as a spare bedroom. As he opened the door his light went out with the current of air, and he was in

total darkness. Presently, however, ns ho turned to grope his way back, the room grew light as a cellar on a rainy afternoon, through a ground glass overhead, and Mr. W----- dimly saw his oldest son on the bed, clad in the habiliments of death, and the coffin beside him, resting on two chairs across the foot end. In a moment the illusion vanished, and Mr. W---- returned to his own room and struck another match, and again entered the spare bed-room, but everything seemed natural as usual. Little was thought of the optical illusion, but last week the eldest son of Mr. W------was taken ill, and he died last Friday. He was a bright boy of some ten summers."

Page 5 of the December 29, 1860 edition of *Banner of Light* is a report by William Henry Burr dated December 17, 1860, and describing what Burr witnessed on December 13, 1860. Burr says that he saw in the presence of a medium named Mrs. French a seemingly paranormal production of drawings, made with incredible speed. We have this description of the drawings made, and the speed in which they were made:

"*No. 1. Bird and bird's nest—half a dozen flowers, leaves and stems. Time, eight seconds.*
No, 2.—Rose on moss—three buds—seven leaves, Time, six seconds.
No. 3. Flowers—serpent coiled about one of the stems. Time, ten seconds.
No. 4. Two birds on branches— two flowers and thirteen leaves. Time, eight seconds.
No. 5. Basket of flowers, various kinds, light and dark. Time, eight seconds.
No. 6. Lake scene -- a row boat with men in it— Three sailing vessels— Mountains and Sky—Dimensions , seven inches by eleven —a perfect rectangle. Time, ten seconds.
No. 7. Storm at sea — a vessel wrecked and nearly submerged— Dimensions, ten inches by thirteen. Time seven seconds."

In the May 18, 1861 edition of *Banner of Light*, page 4, we have a May 3, 1861 account signed by eleven witnesses who claim to have seen this (among quite a few other wonders) on May 1, 1861:

"A large bright spot, an inch and a half in diameter, was now made upon the back of the violin by rubbing it with phosphorus. The light was put out, and very soon t ***he violin rose six or seven feet above the floor and floated rapidly around in the air,*** *making a largo sweep at times, of seven or eight feet. In its movements it could easily be followed by the eye, as the phosphorescent spot made upon it ; was distinctly visible; it was also easily followed by the ear, as its strings were thrumbed*

upon during its flight. As the violin floated around, the medium repeatedly exclaimed, in a loud voice: ' I am here, I am here,' giving us the assurance that he was still in his chair and not following the violin in its movements. The light was called for, and the medium was found tied, as already described, and his feet within the pencil lines."

Robert Dale Owen was once a US congressman. In an 1872 book he describes events of July 10, 1861:

"On the tenth of July, 1861, I joined a few friends in an excursion from the city of New York, by steamboat, to the Highlands of Neversink ; Mr. and Mrs. Underhill being of the party. It occurred to me, while sitting on deck by Mrs. Underhill, to ask if we could have the raps there. Instantly they were distinctly heard first, from the deck; then I heard them, and quite plainly felt them on the wooden stool on which I sat. In the afternoon our party went out in a sailing-boat, fifteen or twenty feet long. There, again at my suggestion, we had them, sounding from under the floor of the boat. It had a centre-board, or sliding keel, and we had raps from within the long, narrow box that inclosed it. At any part of this box where we called for the raps, we obtained them.... I proposed to try if we could have raps from the ground : and immediately I plainly heard them from beneath the ground on which we trod : it was a dull sound, as if blows struck on the earth. Then I asked Mrs. Underhill to touch one of the trees with the tips of her fingers, and, applying my ear to the tree, I heard the raps from beneath the bark. Other persons of our party verified this, as I had done."

The next few pages tells a similar account. On pages 350 to 352 Owen describes a mysterious light floating around in the presence of himself and others. On page 362 Owen gives this account of a seance that produced the levitation of a table weighing 120 pounds:

"Our session was on the evening of October 12, 1860, lasting from half-past nine till eleven. It was held in the same room and at the same table mentioned above, and by gas-light. Present Mr. and Mrs. Ubnderhill, Kate Fox, Mr. Harrison Gray Dyar, of New York, and myself. We had very loud rappings, from various parts of the room and on the chairs. Then, while our hands were on the table, it began to move, sometimes with a rotary motion, sometimes rising up on one side, until finally it rose from the ground all but one leg.....After a time we asked whether, if we removed our fingers from the table-top, while it was in the air, it could still remain suspended ; and the reply (by rapping) being in the affirmative, after aiding it to rise as

before, we withdrew our fingers entirely, raising them above it. ***The table then remained, nearly level, suspended without any human support whatever, during the space of five or six seconds*** *; and then gradually settled down, without jar or sudden dropping, to the floor.*

Then, anxious to advance a step farther, we asked if the table could not be raised from the floor without any aid or contact whatever. The reply being in the affirmative, we stood up and placed all our hands over it, at the distance of three or four inches from the table-top : when it rose of itself, following our hands as we gradually raised them, till it hung in the air about the same distance from the ground as before. There it remained six or seven seconds, preserving its horizontal, and almost as steady as when it rested on the ground : then it slowly descended, still preserving the horizontal, until the feet reached the carpet. As before, there was no jar or sudden dropping. The same experiment was repeated, next evening in the presence of Robert Chambers, after we had completed our tests with the steelyard; and with exactly the same result."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:13 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, astral projection, dreams, levitation, mediums, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, precognition, sleepwalking, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism

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Saturday, November 18, 2023

Spookiest Years, Part 6: 1854 - 1855

In previous posts in this intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1853. Let me pick up the thread and discuss some spooky events reported in 1854 and 1855.

In 1854 William Lloyd Garrison (publisher of the leading anti-slavery newspaper *The Liberator*) remarked on the spiritual manifestations so widely reported during the previous few years:

"When we first heard of the ' Rochester knockings,' we supposed (not personally knowing the persons implicated) that there might be some collusion in that particular case, or, if not, that the phenomena would, ere long, elicit a satisfactory solution, independent of all spiritual agency. As the manifestations have spread from house to house, from city to city, from one part of the country to the other, across the Atlantic into Europe, till now the civilized world is compelled to acknowledge their reality, however diverse in accounting for them ; as these manifestations continue to increase in variety and power, so that all suspicion of trick or imposture becomes simply absurd and preposterous ; and as every attempt to find a solution for them in some physical theory relating to electricity, the odic force, clairvoyance, and the like, has thus far proved abortive, — it becomes every intelligent mind to enter into an investigation of them with candor and fairness, as opportunity may offer, and to bear such testimony in regard to them as the facts may warrant ; no matter what ridicule it may excite on the part of the uninformed or sceptical.

As for ourselves, most assuredly we have been in no haste to jump to a conclusion in regard to phenomena so universally diffused, and of so extraordinary a character. For the last three years, we have kept pace with nearly all that has been published on the subject; and we have witnessed, at various times, many surprising 'manifestations;' and our conviction is, that they cannot be accounted for on any other theory than that of spiritual agency."

As reported here, Baron de Guldenstubbe claimed that on the night of March 16, 1854 he witnessed a column of bluish vapor

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gradually change to become the form of a man. We are told that this happened after the apparition was viewed for a while:

"By slow degrees the outlines lost their distinctness ; and, as the figure faded, the blue column gradually reformed itself, inclosing it as before. This time, however, it was much more luminous...Very gradually the light faded, seeming to flicker up at intervals, like a lamp dying out. From the time the figure appeared until it began to fade mingling with the column, there elapsed about ten minutes : so that the witness of this remarkable apparition had the amplest opportunity fully to examine it."

The Baron also claimed that upon reporting this apparition to a resident of the house, that person said that the place the Baron slept that night had been unoccupied for two years, and that the Baron's report of the features of the apparition exactly matched the appearance of the last person who had slept in the room before himself. The Baron also claimed that two other people had seen the same apparition previously.

An account by John James Bird of Great Malvern (dated February 11, 1856) describes inexplicable events witnessed by Bird in 1855. The account appeared in the March 2, 1856 *Spiritual Herald*. We read the following:

"One of the ladies brought a guitar, and placed it under the table ; as the table was large, it was easily seen; presently the strings were faintly agitated, the sounds became gradually louder, and a tune was fairly played out by invisible means. I observed the instrument to move twice, but I am sure no one touched it. After this the heavy table at which we were sitting gradually rose from the floor, our hands resting upon it; it rose at least six inches, and remained in a state of suspension some time, then tipped backwards and forwards ; this was succeeded by a vibration in the table, that was communicated to our bodies and the chairs upon which we were sitting, as if some powerful fluid were escaping. The sensation, as of the grasp of a hand, was felt on the knee of two of the party successively, followed by very loud raps from the table. A little before twelve o'clock we removed to a room upstairs, and took our seats at a large square table.; here we had loud raps on the table, and from some parts of the room. The lady, to whom I have before alluded, was sitting next to me, and ***we were both of us, with the chairs on which we were sitting, forced***

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violently from the table, nearly to the end of the room, and then drawn round. I tried to resist this, but without success; the table followed us, leaving the rest of the circle behind it. *Our host, who is a learned and most accomplished gentleman, watched the phenomena with a jealous eye, and he has since tested Mr. Home, and is satisfied that there could have been no trickery; he leaves it for science to explain. I am convinced there could have been no collusion or delusion."*

In the May 4, 1856 edition of *The Spiritual Herald,* we have an account by S. W. Brittan of a prediction made near the end of 1855 (Brittan's name is misspelled as Britton):

"On the evening of December 23, 1855, while the writer was engaged, in conversation with several friends who had assembled in the room of S. B. Brittan, at the Tremont House in this city, Mrs. Harriet Porter being also present, was employed at the time in making magnetic passes over one of the editor's daughters, with a view to remove a neuralgic pain in the head. The writer was sitting near the parties. observing the movements of Mrs. P., when the latter suddenly turned round and said with a peculiar emphasis, ' You have asked for a test; I will now give you one: ***THE STEAMSHIP PACIFIC WILL BE WRECKED AND ALL ON BOARD WILL PERISH.*** *Put that in your pocket and keep it for a test.' The Spirit purported to be my son Edward, and on my enquiring for further particulars, he added, 'I will tell you nothing more now; there will be an excitement on the subject, and you will come to see me again. There will also be a report that she is safe, but it will prove to be false.' There were present on the occasion, Mrs. S. B. Brittan, Emma Frances Jay, E. Virginia Brittan, Mrs. Wells, Mr. and Miss Vail, the medium and myself, any of whom will verify the truth of the foregoing statement. I have still in my possession the original memorandum, on the back of which is the following indorsement, made at the time the communication was received-' Spiritual prediction given through Mrs. Harriet Porter, December 28, 1855.' Soon after the announcement respecting the loss of the Pacific was made, I communicated the same to the editor of the Telegraph and to Mr. Charles Partridge. Subsequently, and before any apprehension of the loss of the Pacific had been awakened, I mentioned the subject to many others, and exhibited the memorandum to some twenty persons, including several who had little or no confidence in the*

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- They Had Flourishing Minds But Broken Brains
- Paradoxes That Puncture Professorial Pretensions
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- When World-Class Scientists Saw Ghosts (Part 1)
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- Are Public Schools Teaching a Stealth Religion?
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- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 Cases
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
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- Cosmic Fine-Tuning Visualized
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- "Vacuum Catastrophe" Should Be Called the Vacuum Miracle
- Why the Origin of Humans Is an Unsolved Mystery

claims of spiritualism. The names of the persons here referred to can be given if necessary."

At the modern site here, we read what happened to the steamship Pacific within the next month:

"On 23 January 1856, Pacific departed Liverpool for her usual destination of New York, carrying 45 passengers - a typically small number for a winter voyage - and 141 crew. For this voyage, she had both a new captain and first mate, neither of whom had much transatlantic experience, and also a new chief engineer, who was unfamiliar with Pacific's engines. ***After the ship failed to arrive at New York, other ships were sent to conduct a search, but no trace of the vessel was found.*** *The cause of Pacific's demise is still unknown."*

In Brittan's account, he says he contacted the medium Mrs. Harriet Porter after the Pacific was reported missing, and asked for details on what happened. He was told that the ship had struck an iceberg. We read this on page 115 of the May 4, 1856 *Spiritual Herald*:

"Not many days had elapsed, when the writer of this again found himself at Mrs. Porter's table: the company on this occasion consisted of twelve persons. We had been seated but a short time, when the medium was entranced by a Spirit who said his name was --Faulkner, that he was purser on board the Pacific, had a brother in New York, who was a silversmith, etc. In reply to questions, propounded by the writer and others, the following additional particulars were elicited: When six days out, the Pacific struck an iceberg, at 11 o'clock on the evening of Jan. 29th, and very soon went down, stern foremost. As the vessel sunk, three persons escaped from the wreck and found a temporary resting place on the ice, but they were subsequently frozen to death. It was further alleged that there were forty-eight passengers on board - forty males and eight females; that, at the time of the catastrophe, the ship was in lat. 40 degrees north; that the Captain was at fault in taking the course he did, his object being to make a quicker trip than the Persia, which was then on her first voyage."

The notion of so large a ship being lost in such a way may have seemed far-fetched at such a time, but in 1912 a very large ship was lost in such a way, when the Titanic sunk from striking an iceberg. The latitude of 40 degrees north is just where we would expect a 19th century steamship from Liverpool to be if it was traveling to New York City and was about six days out on its journey. The page here lists 45 passengers, close to the 48 stated above.

According to this web page, in 1861 a bottle was discovered "washed ashore on the Hebrides island of Uist" (an island near Scotland) with a message telling what happened to the ship:

"*On board the Pacific from Liverpool to N.Y. - Ship going down. Confusion on board - icebergs around us on every side. I know I cannot escape. I write the cause of our loss that friends may not live in suspense. The finder will please get it published. W.M. GRAHAM."*

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- The Evidence for Out-of-Body Experiences
- GOAL and Soul: Postulating What We Need to Explain Humans
- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
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- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation
- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List

According to another source, it was confirmed that W. M. Graham was aboard the ship. So it seems that the Pacific was sunk after striking an iceberg, just as the medium had said years before anyone knew how the Pacific was lost. This blog post is to the best of my knowledge the first time anyone has ever noted the remarkable match between the report inside the found bottle and the years-earlier seance claim (reported above) saying that the Pacific disappeared because it struck an iceberg (an idea unknown to authorities at the time the claim was made). Around 1856 it was very rare for ships crossing the Atlantic to be sunk by hitting icebergs. Around that time ships crossing the Atlantic did not travel very fast, and a helmsman seeing an iceberg would tend to have had lots of time to evade the iceberg by steering away from it. When the Titanic sunk in 1912 after hitting an iceberg, it was traveling much faster than ships of the nineteenth century.

In the January 13, 1885 edition of *The Spiritual Telegraph,* we read G.T. Moulton making these claims:

"After sitting five or six minutes in silence, with our hands lying on the top of the table, it began to tip and rock to and fro very rapidly, and stamp its legs on the floor as if trying to break itself to pieces. We asked the Spirits if they could raise the table clear from the floor with our hands lying on the top. Immediately it rose in the air about two feet, with all our hands lying on on its top ; and this was repeated at our request five times, and all done within fifteen or twenty minutes—thus completely upsetting Professor Faraday's theory of mechanical pressure. Two of the circle then sat down on the top of the table and were immediately thrown off by my hands being placed on its top....After the two were thrown off the table, we formed a circle all around it by taking hold of hands and not touching or being within two feet of it, and then asked the Spirits to move it if they could without any person touching it. Soon the table began to move, and tip, and jerk, and for ten minutes we had questions answered by the tipping of the table without any human being touching it. It would move or tip any way at the request of any one in the circle."

In the April 14, 1855 edition of *The Spiritual Telegraph,* we read of a death threat received by those reporting manifestations like those above. In general those making the reports discussed in this "Spookiest Years" series were often subjected to extremely horrible psychological abuse, libel and vilification by the media, clergy and scientists of their time, and in general such people tended to conduct themselves in a very respectable way, particularly given such abuse that might have broken many people.

In the July 28, 1855 edition of *The Spiritual Telegraph* we read this:

"—Mr. P. Demarest, of this city, has just related to us the following occurrences, which he witnessed some time ago at a circle at the house of a gentleman at Green Point....They were requested to sit hack from the table so that they could not- touch it, when the table, a heavy one, surmounted by a marble top, rose bodily into the air, from a foot to two feet above the floor, and swayed about with various undulatory motions.... These

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Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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- alien computer simulation (4)
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movements of the table, which were continued, with variations, for some two or three hours, were accompanied with every variety of concussive sounds, which it was utterly out of the power of any one present to produce ; and when a question was asked, the sound given in answer to it seemed to correspond to its nature and subject. "

In the October 6, 1855 edition of *The Spiritual Telegraph* we read a letter from a G. W. Gage published in a Cincinnati newspaper. He says this, referring to a levitating fourteen-year-old:

"I have spoken to the people several times, and attended their circles as often. They have writing, speaking, healing, prescribing and other kinds of mediums. The night circles are for physical demonstrations, and are somewhat remarkable. The violin and tambourine are carried about the room with great rapidity, and played ; a bell is also carried about and rung in fine time with other instruments. At these meetings I have also felt the spirit-hand. ***What is most remarkable here is, the medium, a miss of about fourteen years of age, is taken up in her chair and carried rapidly around the room as high as the heads of the audience, and without the aid of human touch or contact.*** *Prescriptions have been written out by spirits, which have cured the sick and afflicted by scores. The blind have been made to see, the young and old have been aided by this invisible and to many non-existent agency. And still the good work goes on."*

We read the following about physicist and optics expert David Brewster in an 1855 event in an 1869 book, a passage discussing a meeting with the medium Daniel Dunglas Home:

"The late Sir David Brewster was almost as unfortunate as Faraday in his relations to this perplexing subject. In the early part of 1855, on the invitation of Mr. William Cox, of Jermyn Street, London, Brewster was at a seance, where Mr. Home was the medium. The late Lord Brougham, the late Mrs. Trollope, her son Mr. Thomas Trollope, and Mr. Benjamin Coleman, were also present. Seated in a private room, in the open light of day, ***the party saw among other extraordinary things, a heavy table rise from the floor.****..In a letter to Mr. Coleman (Oct. 9, 1855), Brewster writes, 'It is true that, at Mr. Cox s house, Mr. Home, Mr. Cox, Lord Brougham, and myself sat down to a small table, Mr. Home having previously requested us to examine if there was any machinery about his person ; an examination, however, which we declined to make. When all our hands were upon the table, noises were heard, rappings in abundance; and finally, when we rose up, the table actually rose, as appeared to me, from the ground. This result I do not attempt to explain.' "*

In a public statement dated September 29, 1855, published as a letter to the Morning Advertiser, the scientist Brewster lied by claiming this: "But though I could not account for all these effects, I never thought of ascribing them to spirits stalking beneath the drapery of the table ; and I saw enough to satisfy myself that they could all be produced by human hands and feet, and to prove to others that some of them, at least, had such an origin." No such thing was seen, as can be proven by

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- biosignatures (1)
- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)

Brewster's letter to Coleman quoted above. The same thing is proven by a letter Brewster privately wrote in June 1855 describing the encounter. In that later Brewster stated this, which includes a reference to the mysterious "spirit hands" so often seen around this time:

"*Last of all I went with Lord Brougham to a seance of the new spirit-rapper, Mr. Home, a lad of twenty. ... We four sat down at a moderately-sized table, the structure of which we were invited to examine. In a short time the table shuddered, and a tremulous motion ran up all our arms ; at our bidding these motions ceased and returned. The most unaccountable rappings were produced in various parts of the table,* ***and the table actually rose from the ground when no hand was upon it***. *A larger table was produced, and exhibited similar movements...A small hand-bell was then laid down with its mouth on the carpet, and after lying for some time it actually rang when nothing could have touched it. The bell was then placed on the other side, still upon the carpet, and it came over to me and placed itself in my hand. It did the same to Lord Brougham. These were the principal experiments;* ***we could give no explanation of them, and could not conjecture how they could be produced by any kind of mechanism. Hands are sometimes seen and felt, the hand often grasps another, and melts away, as it were, under the grasp.*** *The object of asking Lord Brougham and me seems to have been to get our favourable opinion of the exhibition, but though neither of us can explain what we saw, we do not believe that it was the work of idle spirits."*

After Brewster's lying letter to the editor claiming he saw nothing paranormal, another person present at the event (William Cox) promptly wrote to the same editor, addressing Brewster, expressing "much surprise" at his statements, and saying, " I have a distinct recollection of the astonishment which both Lord Brougham and yourself expressed, and your remarkable and emphatic exclamation to me : — ' Sir, this upsets the philosophy of fifty years.' "

A day earlier one of the other witnesses of the event (Mr. Coleman) also gave an account of the meeting sharply contradicting Brewster's insinuations about it. Coleman wrote that this exchange occurred between him and Brewster:

"I was as much astonished at what I saw, felt, and heard in the presence of Mr. Home, as any man ; and when I found that Sir David Brewster had been a witness of similar phenomena at the house of my friend, I called upon Sir David, accompanied by my neighbour, and in the course of conversation, Sir David said, that what he and Lord Brougham saw ' was marvellous — quite unaccountable.'

" I then asked him, ' Do you, Sir David, think these things were produced by trick ?' "

" ' No, certainly not,' was his reply."

" ' Is it delusion, think you ?'

" ' No, that is out of the question '

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"'Then what is it?'

" To which he replied, ' I don't know ; but spirit is the last thing I will give in to.'

" I added, ' I can well understand the difficulty which a man like you would have in pronouncing an opinion on a subject which, if it be what it appears, would upset in a moment the philosophy of your life.'

" Sir David then told me what he and Lord Brougham had witnessed. ' The table — a large dinner-table, I believe — moved about in the most extraordinary manner ; and among other things, a large accordion was conveyed by an invisible agency to my hand, and then to Lord Brougham's, in which, held by his Lordship's right hand, apart from any person, it played an air throughout.' "

A thorough discussion of the Brewster scandal (including the quotes above) is contained in an appendix of Home's biography, an appendix which can be read here. An equally thorough discussion is found on pages 139-142 of the book *Nineteenth Century Miracles* by Emma Hardinge Britten, which can be read here. The evidence here is clear, with three witnesses (and Brewster himself in private letters) giving testimony showing that the distinguished scientist Sir David Brewster lied when he wrote to a newspaper vaguely insinuating he could explain what he saw when meeting Daniel Dunglas Home, and vaguely insinuating that some trickery was involved. The reality of the paranormal phenomena involving Home would later be confirmed by a scientist greater than Brewster, the scientist Sir William Crookes (discoverer of the element thallium) who thoroughly tested Home, and reported the same type of inexplicable phenomena described above, finding no evidence of any trickery.

No one should be the least bit surprised to read the case above of a scientist lying about the paranormal, as lying and misspeaking on this topic routinely occur from professors. In his book The Enchanted Boundary, Walter Franklin Prince documented very many cases of professors speaking or writing dishonestly on this topic. In the 93 years since 1930 the kind of dishonesty and intransigent denialism documented by Prince in his 1930 book has continued full blast from professors, who tend to make generalizations about evidence of the paranormal indicating a great lack of scholarly diligence, and tend to sound exactly like people who failed to do their homework and people who developed unshakable convictions on such topics which they regarded as a substitute for seriously examining the relevant evidence.

There is an expression that history is written by the winners. We see that very dramatically in the case of the rare mentions today of the inexplicable manifestations reported around this time. The lies regarding such manifestations occurred mainly from those trying to heap scorn on those who reported the inexplicable effects rather than from such witnesses. History's winners ending up in professor positions after 1850 have given us a bogus history of these events, in which the gaslighting liars

- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)
- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)

are depicted as the good guys, and the good honest witnesses are depicted as crazy or cheats.

In 1855 Canadian author Susanna Moodie described a meeting she had with the medium Kate Fox, who Moodie describes as having the most beautiful eyes she ever saw:

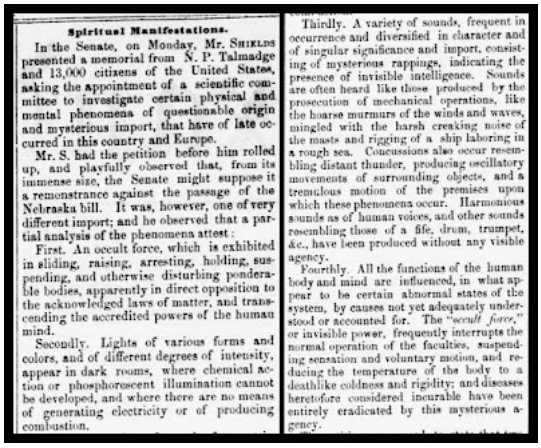
"Miss F. [Kate Fox] told me to write a list of names of dead and living friends, but neither to read to her, nor to allow her to see them. I did this upon one side of a quire of paper, the whole thickness between her and me, writing with her back to me. She told me to run my pen along the list, and as a test the spirits would rap five times for every dead, and three times for every living, friend. I inwardly smiled at this. Yet strange to say, they never once missed."

Moodie reports a name being spelled out by raps, apparently under the common system of this time by which the alphabet would be recited, and a letter would be written down whenever a mysterious rap occurred after a letter was named. The name spelled out (Anna Laura Harral) was someone whose name was unknown to Kate Fox, but who Moodie had made a compact with, under which either of the two people surviving death would try to communicate evidence of survival to the surviving person. Moodie reports a wide variety of inexplicable sound phenomena occurring around Kate Fox (as did quite a few distinguished authors), including sounds (combined with vibrations) coming from the dirt or rocks Moodie stood on. Moodie reports a piano playing by itself, soon after Kate Fox suggested that it would.

Moodie reports asking that the birth year and death year engraved under a ring Mr. Moodie was wearing be identified by the mysterious raps. The correct years were given, she says, as was her father's name and the date of his birth and death, and the place and cause of her father's death. Like countless other witnesses, she reports such questions were correctly answered, even though posed only mentally rather than orally. Could it all have been some super-elaborate fraud by some mastermind of a trickster? On the page here, former congressman Robert Dale Owen says that he had known Kate Fox for years, and that she was "one of the most simple-minded" persons he had ever met, and that she was "as incapable of framing, or carrying on, any deliberate scheme of imposition as a ten year-old child is of administering a government."

Below is an image of an 1854 newspaper account describing how 13,000 people petitioned the US Senate to investigate paranormal phenomena.

- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)
- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)



Spiritual Manifestations.

In the Senate, on Monday, Mr. SHIELDS presented a memorial from N. P. Talmadge and 13,000 citizens of the United States, asking the appointment of a scientific committee to investigate certain physical and mental phenomena of questionable origin and mysterious import, that have of late occurred in this country and Europe.

Mr. S. had the petition before him rolled up, and playfully observed that, from its immense size, the Senate might suppose it a remonstrance against the passage of the Nebraska bill. It was, however, one of very different import; and he observed that a partial analysis of the phenomena attest:

First. An occult force, which is exhibited in sliding, raising, arresting, holding, suspending, and otherwise disturbing ponderable bodies, apparently in direct opposition to the acknowledged laws of matter, and transcending the accredited powers of the human mind.

Secondly. Lights of various forms and colors, and of different degrees of intensity, appear in dark rooms, where chemical action or phosphorescent illumination cannot be developed, and where there are no means of generating electricity or of producing combustion.

Thirdly. A variety of sounds, frequent in occurrence and diversified in character and of singular significance and import, consisting of mysterious rappings, indicating the presence of invisible intelligence. Sounds are often heard like those produced by the prosecution of mechanical operations, like the hoarse murmurs of the winds and waves, mingled with the harsh creaking noise of the masts and rigging of a ship laboring in a rough sea. Concussions also occur resembling distant thunder, producing oscillatory movements of surrounding objects, and a tremulous motion of the premises upon which these phenomena occur. Harmonious sounds as of human voices, and other sounds resembling those of a fife, drum, trumpet, &c., have been produced without any visible agency.

Fourthly. All the functions of the human body and mind are influenced, in what appear to be certain abnormal states of the system, by causes not yet adequately understood or accounted for. The "occult force," or invisible power, frequently interrupts the normal operation of the faculties, suspending sensation and voluntary motion, and reducing the temperature of the body to a deathlike coldness and rigidity; and diseases heretofore considered incurable have been entirely eradicated by this mysterious agency.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:16 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, ESP, levitation, life after death, mediums, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism, table turning

Monday, November 6, 2023

Spookiest Years, Part 5: The Year 1853

In previous posts in the intermittently appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog (here, here, here and here), I had looked at some very spooky events reported between 1848 and 1852. Let me pick up the thread and report some spooky events reported in 1853.

In 1853 we saw the publication of "A discussion of the facts and philosophy of ancient and modern spiritualism" by S. B. Brittan and B. W. Richmond. Samuel Byron Brittan MD was much later the writer of a work I called a classic of parapsychology, the work *Man and His Relations*, which I review here. The book is a back-and-forth dialog between Richmond and Brittan, with Richmond often making skeptical speculations trying to minimize spiritual manifestations like the ones mentioned in the quote below, speculations that Brittan tries to rebut. The book shows a very healthy tendency of thinkers such as Brittan to study and respond at great length to objections by skeptics.

On page 14 of the book we have some remarkable testimony by nine named witnesses, four of them medical doctors. In the middle of their testimony, quoted by Brittan, they state the following:

"Persons at the circle have been unexpectedly turned round with the chairs in which they were sitting, and moved to and -from the table ; chairs and sofas have suddenly started, from their positions against the wall, and moved forward to the center of the room, when they were required in the formation of the circle ; the persons in the circle have each successively lifted his own side of the table, and the invisible power has raised the opposite side correspondingly ; occasionally the spirits have raised the table entirely, and sustained in air, at a distance of from one to three feet from the floor, so that all could satisfy themselves that no person in the flesh was touching it ; lights of various colors have been produced in dark rooms ; the table has often been rocked with great violence, and suddenly — and unexpectedly to the whole company — it has been instantly arrested and held firm and immovable, with the upper surface inclined to an angle

- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)
- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)

of some forty-five degrees, when the lamp, pencils and other objects on the table, would slide or roll to the very edge, and there remain fixed as if riveted to the table ; a man has been suspended in, and conveyed through, the air, in all a distance of fifty feet or more. The communications have been given in various ways, but chiefly in writings and by the rappings, after the ordinary alphabetical mode."

Page 16 of the book lists the following people as asserting the claim above: R. T. Hallock, M. D. , A. G. Hull, M. D., John F. Gray, M.D., L. T. Warner, M.D., W. J. Baner, Samuel T. Fowler, Almira L. Fowler, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Partridge.

In the book here (pages 101 to 102) we have an account claiming a miraculous healing. We are told that a medium identified only as Mrs. French was strangely compelled to go to a place where a blind boy was found, and strangely found her self unable to leave. We are told that after some vaguely described manipulations there soon occurred a healing of the boy's blindness.

An 1853 book quotes an account submitted to a Philadelphia newspaper:

"Visiting at the house of a friend when a medium was present, I heard, for the second time, the 'rappings ;' but, such is the uncertainty in locating sound, and the many ways of producing it, that these were, to me, not convincing proofs of either spiritual or electrical agency. I was induced to form one of a circle; and the table we surrounded soon began to oscillate rapidly. My right arm was seized with a convulsive tremor, and though then in a 'positive condition,' it refused obedience to my will. I looked upon it with the same surprise that I would have regarded the arm of another, subject to the same wild and wondrous spell. A pencil and paper were lying on the table. The pencil came into my hand; my fingers were clenched on it! An unseen iron-grasp compressed the tendons of my arm—my hand was flung violently forward on the paper, and I wrote meaning sentences, without any intention, or knowing what they were to be. Such messages were thus addressed to me, and through others in the circle, so unexpected, and bearing strong interior evidence in structure of thought and language of having come from the loved and gone from whom they purported to come, that I yielded to the gush of bewildering emotion, as I would have done had I found myself suddenly in the society of all most dear to me."

In the April 2, 1853 edition of *The Spiritual Telegraph*, we have an account claiming spiritual manifestations at the house of Mrs. Brown at #78 West 26th Street, occurring a week previously. The listed witnesses were J. F. Gray, George Willets, E. F. Capron, Mrs. Brown and the medium Catherine Fox (the same as Kate Fox, one of the famed Fox sisters). We read of mysterious events in a well-lit room. We are told that first the handle of a bell mysterious disappeared, and was just as mysteriously restored. We are told that a pocket knife, a set of keys and a quarter coin were placed under a table, and that all disappeared. We are told that a search could not produce them, but that the keys and knife suddenly reappeared as if thrown.

The same edition gives this account of clairvoyance from the Cleveland Plain Dealer:

- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)
- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)
- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)

"A Mr. Jackson, of Ohio City, came into our office yesterday with his little daughter, a fine, rosy girl about seven years of age. It surprised us to learn that so young a person should be a clairvoyant. Mr. Jackson states that she has possessed such powers of vision for about seven weeks—that she received intimations one evening from the Spirit-world that she would be magnetized [hypnotized] and receive the the gift next day. Such accordingly was the case. She also became a medium, produced the rappings, and has frequent intercourse with the spirits of the departed inhabiting other spheres. In the experiments performed in our office, the most doubting skeptic admitted that there was no collusion, and that her mortal vision was completely obstructed. A kid glove, filled with cotton, was placed upon each eye, a bandage applied over them , and securely tied around her head, A Spanish quarter of a dollar was then thrown upon the table and she was requested to tell the date. She took it up, and instantly rend—'1700.' A bank bill was next presented, and she read it off promptly, ' That's one dollar. State Bank of Ohio.' On one bill a steam boat and sail vessel were engraved in the vignette so minutely as to be just discernible by the naked eye. She described them exactly. In fact, anything that was placed before her was read or described just as correctly as if she were examining it with the natural eye. She has the power of putting herself into the clairvoyant state, as also of throwing it off."

Similar powers were previously demonstrated innumerable times in public exhibitions by the clairvoyant Alexis Didier.

In the July 2, 1853 *Spiritual Telegraph* we have evidence of the utter obstinance of mainstream scientific authorities in encountering paranormal phenomena. We read a long newspaper account of a public investigation of the phenomenon called table tipping or table turning, conducted before a large audience at a public hall in Liverpool, England, one called the Atheneum. On a stage before many public spectators, various tests were done. Some of them clearly produced inexplicable phenomena. We read this:

"The experiments commenced at eight o'clock. The first table which moved was a round one, about three feet in diameter, standing upon three legs, without castors, and having a leather top. At this table four ladies took their places, and in five minutes it began to turn rapidly, the ladies running round with it. After several stoppages, for which the experimenters could not account, the table moved round so rapidly that several of the ladies appeared to be getting giddy, until two of them became so much alarmed that they discontinued the experiment. These ladies had simply placed their hands upon the table, without touching those of each other....After each successful experiment, a member of the committee, or the chairman, inquired of each of the operators whether he or she had abstained from muscular action upon the table, and in every instance a decided assurance was given in the affirmative."

We hear mention of a Dr. Braid giving a nonsensical claim that such effects were produced by unconscious muscle action. A table of the described size with no castors (no wheels) could not be spun rapidly by four people merely touching it, no matter how much they pressed it. In the same edition we read this:

"The great table-moving question, which has excited such an extraordinary degree of interest in this city [Paris] as to be the universal topic of conversation for a period much longer than the

- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)
- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)

nine days' life generally enjoyed by a wonder, has at length forced itself on the attention of the Academy of Sciences. Among the vast mass of letters and reports detailing experiments, which have been sent to the Academy, the presiding authorities selected one by M. Scguin, a distinguished savant, to be read at its last public sitting. The statements made in this document were of the most extraordinary kind, one of them being, that a table when acted on was made to move to the notes of a piano."

In the July 9, 1853 *Spiritual Telegraph* we have a report from the Paris correspondent of the New York Times:

"It seems to me that ***I have said enough about table turning in France****, and that l am becoming repetitious, if not tedious. I must say, however, that* ***such is the fever, that there is hardly a house in Paris that the phenomenon has not invaded.*** *Experiments are daily made at the Observatory, at the Hotel Dion, at the Institute, at the Eeole Poly technique...The American savans [experts] have kept aloof, and, in the space of two years— three years, perhaps—no explanation has been offered of a fact which has stared then in the face the whole time...All the professors, the instructors, those who study far those who have not the time to study for themselves, have kept clear of a matter which they did not discover, and which they consequently can not recognise. ...The* Feuilleton *of Jules Jan in this morning, treats of nothing but table turning ; and that of Auguste Lireux, in the* Constitutionnel, *contains an account of a series of extremely successful experiments, in which he, Emile Angier, Baroche, Ferrien, of the Academy of Sciences, and others, all skeptics when they began, wore convicted believers when they finished."*

In the August 6, 1853 *Spiritual Telegraph* we have a comment on the attempt of Michael Faraday to explain the table turning phenomena as mere unconscious action by the muscles: "As for the Professor's conclusion which resolves the wonders of table-moving to mere muscular and quasi voluntary action, we are willing to leave it in the hands of the thousands who have repeatedly seen heavy tables, and other articles of furniture, move with great freedom and power when no living being or other visible agency was in contact with them, and who have witnessed many other phenomena to which his tests fail to apply." In the same edition a J. C. Hall gives this testimony:

"I refer to instances of table moving, in my presence, without any hands touching them. Chairs have been upset in the room, and made to revolve faster than the persons present could possibly move. I have seen with my own eyes a common wooden table, while standing on the floor, made to tremble and quiver every fiber of the wood, as if it was live flesh—effects which all the men in the world could not produce, and the aid of all the sciences could not effect. I have also seen the same table move in different directions around the room with no one near it, and on stepping back, as if to leave the room, the table followed with no one near it, until it struck the door-casing, and, turning upside down, and from that lip edgewise, seemed not to be contented till it had chased me completely out of the room, coming quite through the door into an adjoining hall."

- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)
- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)

The legend that Michael Faraday explained the phenomenon of table turning is one of the most groundless legends of the many groundless legends told by science professors. It is an example of what goes on very often when skeptics try to explain things: what we may call "weakest examples" explanation. It works like this: you claim that you can explain some baffling phenomenon beyond your explanation, by the method of ignoring all of the stronger examples of the phenomenon, and offering something that might explain only the weakest examples. So, for example, a skeptic might try to explain UFO sightings by saying they are caused by misidentifications of the planet Venus. Such an explanation only handles the weakest examples of UFO sightings, not the strongest examples in which people reported seeing something very large in the sky or something moving incredibly fast.

Faraday's explanation was a similar example of "weakest examples" explanation. His "ideomotor effect" explanation of unconscious muscle action could only explain the weakest examples of the table turning phenomenon, cases in which lots of people put their hands on a table, and the table slightly moved. His explanation completely failed to explain all of the stronger examples of the phenomenon, which included:

(1) Very many reports of tables levitating in the air when no person touched the table.
(2) Very many reports of tables standing on two legs, with the other end rising high in the air, or a table standing up on only single leg.
(3) Very many reports of tables violently moving about suddenly, often when no one was touching the table.
(4) Very many reports of tables spinning around rapidly, with or without someone touching the table.

Whenever any mainstream source attempts to repeat the groundless legend that Michael Faraday explained table turning, the source will inevitably describe table turning by only citing the weakest examples of its occurrence, never the stronger examples, even though thousands of witnesses (many very reliable professionals) in many different countries reported the stronger varieties of the phenomena. As an 1855 book states, "Next comes the theory of Professor Faraday of world-renowned fame, that the moving of the table is by the unconscious force of the medium, when there are thousands of witnesses to the fact of the movement of tables, where neither a medium nor any other person was near them !"

This phenomenon of table turning was also scientifically investigated at length by Count Agenor de Gasparin, who published in 1857 a two-volume scientific book describing countless paranormal effects (such as table levitation and mysterious rappings) observed under controlled conditions. Gasparin's research is well-summarized in Chapter VI of the book *Mysterious Psychic Forces* by the astronomer Camille Flammarion. For example, Gasparin described this happening on September 20, 1853:

"Some one proposed the experiment which consists in causing a table to rotate and give raps while it has on it a man weighing say a hundred and ninety pounds. We accordingly placed such a man on the table, and the twelve experimenters, in chain,

- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)
- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)

applied their fingers to it. The success was complete: the table turned, and rapped several strokes. Then it rose up entirely off the floor in such a way as to upset the person who was upon it."

Such a result is inexplicable through any result of subconscious muscle movement. Gasparin reported the following occurring on October 7, 1853:

"Let us turn again to the finest of all demonstrations, that of levitation without contact. We began by performing it three times. Then, since it was thought by some that the inspection of the witnesses could be carried on in a surer way in the case of a small table than in that of a large one, and with five operators more certainly than with ten, we had a plain deal centre-table brought which the chain, reduced by half, sufficed to put in rotation. Then the hands were lifted, and, contact with the table being entirely broken, it rose seven times into the air at our command."

The original text of this report (in French) is contained here. I used Google Translate to verify that the translation above is accurate.

Here is what Gasparin reported occurring on November 9, 1853:

"*Our first care was to renew the experiment of the levitation of an inert weight. It was agreed among us this time that we would always start from the state of absolute immobility in the object: we wanted to produce movement, not to continue it.*

The centre of the table, then, having been fixed with nice precision, a first tub of sand, weighing 46 pounds, was placed upon it. The legs easily rose from the floor when they got the order.

A second tub, weighing 42 pounds, was next placed in the middle of the other. They were both lifted—less easily, but very neatly and clearly.

Then a third tub, smaller, and weighing 28 ⅗ pounds, was placed on top of the two others. The levitations took place.

We had still further got ready enormous stones weighing altogether 48½ pounds. They were placed on the third tub. After rather long hesitation, the table lifted several times in succession each of its three legs. It lifted them with a force, a decision, an élan, which surprised us. But its strength, already put to so many proofs, could not resist this last one. Bending under the powerful swaying motion imparted by the total mass of 165 pounds, it suddenly broke down, and its massive centre-post was split from top to bottom—to the great peril of the operators on the side of whom the entire load rolled off."

The original text of this report (in French) is contained here. I used Google Translate to verify that the translation above is accurate.

Since the reports above were of levitations of a table without contact by humans, they obviously cannot be explained through Faraday's "ideomotor effect" of subconscious muscle movement. Shockingly, the phenomenon of table turning had

- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)
- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)

stood up well to rigorous scientific experiments, with the investigators finding it to be a mysterious paranormal reality rather than something they could debunk.

In his 1859 book *Mystic Hours, or Spiritual Experiences*, George A. Redman describes having some astounding experiences at a time that seemed to be 1853 (since he says they occurred at about the time of Faraday's hypothesis appeared, which was in 1853). He reports this example of the table phenomenon (using the term pirouetting to refer to spinning around in a circle):

"Simultaneously with the sound of his skillfully wielded bow, the table commenced pirouetting like some votary of Terpsichore. It would balance itself, first on one of its legs, then on one of its leaves, then wheel round again, till it ultimately reached the parlor door, against which it then began thumping as if to say, 'Let me out.' "

This is a reference to a table standing up on only one of its legs. Redman elsewhere says that around the same time he saw "the table slowly tipped to an angle of 45 degrees." On another page he says a table mysteriously rose so that the "table was next lifted to a level with our heads." On another page he says, "Soon after taking my seat in our friend's comfortable parlor, the old table, as if conscious of our needs, came sliding into the room, no one touching it, and all present, nothing loath, assembled round it." On another page we read this: "Mrs. Green being lifted by the spirits from the floor, and placed on the bed-piece of the table, it started down stairs, not stopping till it regained the lower hall, when Mrs. G-. stepped off, to the no small amusement of those who had thus had an opportunity of testing the reliability of Professor Faraday's expositions." On another page Redman reports a table levitating into the air and then mysteriously shattering into pieces. On another page Redman says, ""The table rose and came down on the floor with a tremendous thump; it danced to and fro without human contact, at each of its movements making the very house shake."

Redman also reports being mysteriously levitated with two other people:

"I was raised in a half stupified state from the chair, conveyed to the ceiling of the room, which was some ten feet from the floor, and I floated alone in the air for a few moments. I was then joined by Mrs. Shepherd, and soon after by her daughter. Here were three of us, all suspended in the atmosphere, in no contact with any material object, but upheld by an unseen power, and wafted by it over the heads of some dozen individuals all wide awake, and in the perfect possession of their reasoning faculties."

In an 1853 work John Edmonds (a judge of the New York State Supreme Court) listed some of the paranormal manifestations he had seen that involved tables:

"Thus, I have known a pine table with four legs lifted bodily up from the floor, in the center of a circle of six or eight persons, turned upside down and laid upon its top at our feet, then lifted up over our heads, and put leaning against the back of the sofa on which we sat. I have known that same table to be tilted up on two legs, its top at an angle with the floor of forty-five degrees, when it neither fell over of

- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)
- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

itself, nor could any person present put it back on its four legs. I have seen a mahogany table, having only a center leg, and with a lamp burning upon it, lifted from the floor at least a foot, in spite of the efforts of those present, and shaken backward and forward as one would shake a goblet in his hand, and the lamp retain its place, though its glass pendants rang again. 1 have seen the same table tipped up with the lamp upon it, so far that the lamp must have fallen off unless retained there by something else than its own gravity, yet it fell not, moved not."

On another page of his 1853 work, Edmonds quotes a letter from N. P. Tallamadge who discussed seeing something else involving a table, something that could never be explained by any theory of unconscious "ideomotor force" as advanced by Faraday:

"The table moved occasionally, perhaps a foot, first one way and then the other. After the communication closed, we all moved back from the table, from two to four feet — so that no one touched it. Suddenly it moved from the position it occupied some three or four feet — rested a few moments — and then moved back again to its original position. Then it again moved as far the other way, and returned to the place it started from. One side of it was then raised, and stood for a few moments at an angle of about thirty-five degrees, and then again rested on the floor as usual.

The table was a large, heavy, round one, at which ten or a dozen persons might be seated at dinner. During all these movements no person touched it, nor was any one near it. After seeing it raised in the manner above mentioned, I had the curiosity to test its weight by raising it myself. I accordingly took my seat by it — placed my hands under the leaf, and exerted as much force as I was capable of in that sitting posture, and could not raise it a particle from the floor. I then stood up, in the best possible position to exert the greatest force — took hold of the leaf, and still could not raise it with all the strength I could apply. I then requested the three ladies to take hold around the table, and try altogether to lift it. We lifted upon it until the leaf and top began to crack, and did not raise it a particle. We then desisted, fearing we should break it. I then said, 'Will the spirits permit me to raise the table?' I took hold alone, and raised it without difficulty !"

On the same page and the next page of his 1853 work, Tallamadge describes sitting on a table while the entire table (with him sitting on it) levitated six inches above the floor.

The 1853 book "Sights and sounds: the mystery of the day: comprising an entire history of the American 'spirit' manifestations" by lawyer Henry Spicer is a long and balanced look at the reports of inexplicable phenomena between 1848 and 1853. Constantly addressing an imagined skeptical reader, the book "bends over backwards" to consider every possible natural explanation for the reported phenomena, finding none of them satisfactory. The author sounds like someone who would have been much happier dismissing all the reports as fraud, but who finds himself unable to do that. Near the end of the book (page 461-462) he states that the extraordinary character of the manifestations have been proven, that all attempts to explain them have failed, and that what remains is an important mystery that is unsolved.

Most professors fail to seriously study the paranormal

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:30 AM No comments:

Labels: ESP, levitation, life after death, mediums, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism, table turning

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Spookiest Years, Part 4: The Year 1852

In my previous posts in this intermittently-appearing "Spookiest Years" series I analyzed and quoted accounts of the paranormal from the years 1848, 1850 and 1851. Now let us look at accounts of the paranormal dating from 1852.

In 1852 there appeared the book "An exposition of views respecting the principal facts, causes, and peculiarities involved in spirit manifestations : together with interesting phenomenal statements and communications" by Adin Ballou which can be read here. Adin Ballou (1803-1890) was a Christian clergyman who wrote quote a few books on different topics, including the autobiography that can be read here. It is always desirable to have lots of information about someone who claims observation about the paranormal, as well as his diverse samples of his writings, as such things are useful in judging whether the witness is a credible one.

On pages 7-9 the author categorizes various types of event he calls "spirit manifestations," including a variety of mysterious noises such as raps, and also the following:

- *"The moving of material substances, with like indications of intelligence ; such as tables, sofas, light-stands, chairs, and various other articles ; shaking, tipping, sliding, raising them clear of the floor, placing them in new positions, (all this sometimes in spite of athletic and heavy men doing their utmost to hold them down ;) taking up the passive body of a person, and carrying it from one position to another across the room, through mid air ; opening and shutting doors ; thrumming musical instruments ; undoing well clasped pocket-books, taking out their contents, and then, by request, replacing them as before ; writing with pens, pencils, and other substances both liquid and solid, sometimes on paper, sometimes on*

common slates, and sometimes on the ceilings of a room, &.c.... "

- *"Presenting apparitions, in some instances, of a spirit hand and arm, in others, of the whole human form, and in others, of several deceased persons conversing together ; causing distinct touches to be felt by the mortal living, grasping and shaking their hands; and giving many other sensible demonstrations of their existence."*
- *"Through these various manifestations communicating to men in the flesh numberless affectionate and intelligent assurances of an immortal existence, messages of consolation, and annunciations of distant events unknown at the time, but subsequently corroborated ; predictions of forth-coming occurrences subsequently verified, forewarnings against impending danger, medicinal prescriptions of great efficacy, wholesome reproofs, admonitions and counsels, expositions of spiritual, theological, religious, moral and philosophical truths appertaining to the present and future states, and important to human welfare in every sphere of existence, sometimes comprised in a single sentence, and sometimes in an ample book."*

Most of those who have studied this topic are aware of how such claims eventually appeared in the decades following 1848. But it is remarkable to see a claim in 1852 that such things were already occurring at that date. We then have in the book several pages that are quoted from the work described in my previous post. On page 39 we have a long 1850 statement by a Charles Hammond quoted "from a pamphlet by D. M. Dewey." I have not been able to find the original document. On page 46 Ballou gives some eyewitness testimony, claiming he saw some amazing things:

"I have seen tables and lightstands of various size moved about in the most astonishing manner, by what purported to be the same invisible agency, with only the gentle and passive resting of the hands or finger-ends of the Medium on one of their edges. Also, many distinct movings of such objects, by request, without the touch of the Medium at all. I have sat and conversed by the hour together with the authors of these sounds and motions, by means of signals first agreed on ; asking questions and obtaining answers — receiving communications spelled out by the alphabet — discussing propositions sometimes made by them to me, and vice versa — all by a slow process, indeed, but with every possible demonstration of intelligence, though not without incidental misapprehensions and mistakes. I have witnessed the asking of mental questions by inquirers, who received as prompt and correct answers as when the questions were asked audibly to the cognition of the Medium.

I have known these invisibles, by request, to write their names with a common plumbago pencil on a clean sheet of paper — half a dozen of them, each in a different hand....I have requested what purported to be the spirit of a friend many years deceased, to go to a particular place, several miles distant from that of the sitting, and to bring me back intelligence respecting the then

health and doings of a certain relative well-known to the parties. In three minutes of time the intelligence was obtained, numerous particulars given, some of them rather improbable, but every one exactly confirmed the next day, by personal inquiries made for that purpose...."

There follows a great deal of metaphysical speculation by Ballou. Notably on pages 54-55 he denounces slavery as sinful, and also denounces other things such as war and intemperance. He tells us on page 56 that these speculations and moral teachings are what is taught by "ninety-nine one hundredths of the communications of reliable spirits throughout the country," but fails to back up such a claim with specifics. There then follows a very long and rather tedious section of the book in which Ballou answers objections that could be made to the reports and teachings he has given.

On page 127 Ballou begins a chapter quoting what critics are saying about reports of spiritual manifestations. He documents the enormous hatred and calumny and character assassination that went on by those desperate to suppress the flourishing spiritual movement he was part of. Finally on page 176 Ballou gives us some more testimony regarding paranormal events. There follows about two dozen pages that are not worth summarizing, because they fail to mention specific witnesses.

In the last part of the book we have a long series of questions and answers. The answers purport to be from Ballou's deceased son. Ballou says he got the answers from a medium, but does not tell the exact method by which the medium produced them. He tells us that "the ideas were strongly impressed on her mind, and written out with her hand, by a spiritual intelligence superior and distinct from her own." Since we don't have any very strong reason to believe in a paranormal effect here, I won't bother to summarize the answers given, which easily could have come solely from the mind of the medium herself.

Ballou's book dates from 1852. In that year we have the start of another stream of information on this topic: a weekly periodical called the *Spiritual Telegraph,* one published in New York City. The first edition of that publication (dated May 8, 1852) has an account of an April 4, 1852 meeting in the house of Rufus Elmer in Springfield, Massachusetts. Four named witnesses (including David A. Wells, a professor of chemistry at Harvard) state this:

"The table was moved in every possible direction, and with great force, when we could not perceive any cause of motion...In two instances, at least, while the hands of all the members of the circle were placed on the top of the table—and ***while no visible power was employed to raise the table, or otherwise move it from its position—it was seen to rise clear of the floor, and to float in the atmosphere for several seconds****, as if sustained by some denser medium than air...Mr. Wells seated himself on the table, which was rocked to and fro with great violence, and at length* ***it poised itself on two legs, and remained in this position for some thirty seconds, when no other person was in contact with the table.****...In conclusion, we may observe that D. D. Hume, the medium, frequently urged us*

to hold his hands and feet. During these occurrences the room was well lighted, the lamp was frequently placed on and under the table, and every possible opportunity was afforded us for the closest inspection, and we submit this one emphatic declaration : we know that we were not imposed op on nor deceived."

This is the same Daniel Dunglas Home mentioned in the middle of my post on observations of the paranormal in 1851. Again, Home's name is misspelled as Hume. We seem to have some interesting progress reported. While the 1851 account mentioned a table merely rising up on two legs, this account describes the table as fully levitating above the ground. In the August 21, 1852 edition of the *Spiritual Telegraph*, we have an even more astounding claim: the claim that Home was observed levitating. We read this (again, Home's name is misspelled):

"Suddenly, and without any expectation on the part of the company ***the medium, Mr. Hume, was taken up in the air****! I had hold of his band at the time, and I felt of his feet—they were lifted a foot from the flour! He palpitated from head to foot with the contending emotions of joy and fear which choked his utterance. Again and again he was taken from the floor, and* ***the third time he was carried to the lofty ceiling of the apartment, with which his hands and head came in gentle contact.*** *I felt the distance from the soles of bis boot* to the floor and it was nearly three feet ! Others touched his feet to satisfy themselves."*

The author of this statement is identified merely as F--------. If there was no further confirmation of this claim, we might have to dismiss it as some reckless lie. But, in fact, in the coming years very many named witnesses would claim that they saw the same wonder of Daniel Dunglas Home levitating (as you can see by reading the link here and future installments of this series).

An 1853 book reiterates the claim above, telling us that it occurred on the 8th of August, 1852, in the home of Ward Cheney of Manchester, Connecticut, and that the person making the report above was one of the editors of the *Hartford Times*.

The same book tells us that levitations were also seen in connection with the medium Henry C. Gordon. We read this:

"Mr. Gordon has several times been taken up in a similar manner. This has twice occurred in this city — in both cases at the residence of our distinguished friend, Dr. John F. Gray, in Lafayette-place. In both instances the phenomenon transpired in presence of a number of intelligent and scientific observers. ***In one case Gordon was carried not less than sixty feet through different apartments, and was supported at irregular distances of from four to eight feet from the floor****, while performing this aerial journey."*

1852 also saw the publication of the book "The Spiritual Teacher" by R. P. Ambler (Russell Perkins Ambler). The book's full title claims that it was "written by spirits of the Sixth Circle." At the book's beginning we have a testimony by five witnesses that the book was produced with extraordinary speed, rather as if some supernatural or paranormal power was controlling or

inspiring the person (Ambler) who wrote down the text. The testimony states this:

"By reference to the facts in the case, it is found that this book has been written with vast and almost incredible rapidity. On this point the undersigned would state that the whole book, which comprises a series of twelve lectures, extending over two hundred and six pages of foolscap paper, was written within four days this process having been commenced on the morning of Wednesday, March 10th, 1852, and completed on the following Saturday evening, March 13th. The average time per day employed in writing was ten hours and fifty-five minutes, and the maximum number of pages produced on a single day was fifty-five, the shortest time occupied in writing a single page being eight minutes.

With relation to the manner in which this book was written, the undersigned would state that the hand and arm of the medium were suspended during the whole time of writing in such a manner as not to rest on the desk or manuscript and that, upheld in this way, the pen glided rapidly over, the paper with an even and continuous movement without any apparent thought or care on the part of the writer, and without any perceptible pause at the commencement of sentences or paragraphs ...

JAMES WILSON,

JOHN D. LORD,

MRS. G, W. HARRISON,

MISS. DELPHINA P. DUBNAR,

MRS. R. P. AMBLER.

Springfield, March 20, 1852."

The book is a very sophisticated work from a philosophical and literary standpoint. A claim often made by skeptics about the wonders of the nineteenth century and claimed communications from the Great Beyond (or claimed paranormal communications) is something like this: "Nothing ever arises from such supposed communication except low-quality material." Such a generalization simply isn't true. "The Spiritual Teacher" is actually a work of very high literary and philosophical sophistication, the type of work we might expect from a philosophy professor with very good writing skills. Similarly, the literary works of Patience Worth (arising from an ouija board) are works of superb quality, with the best poems of Patience Worth equaling in quality the best poems of Shelley and Keats.

In the 1854 book "The Spiritual Telegraph" compiled by S. B. Brittan from writings in the periodical "The Spiritual Telegraph," we have this account of events in the year 1852 (the reference to being magnetized refers to falling into a trance):

"Mrs. Harriet Porter was magnetized by Spirits, at Bridgeport, Conn., on the 27th day of July, 1852 — the day before the steamer Henry Clay was destroyed — when the following singular manifestation occurred. The medium being entranced, was suddenly impelled to leave the table and go to a closet, where she took a newspaper from among a number that were lying on a shelf. As she came out of the closet the index finger of her right hand commenced moving over the paper with the greatest rapidity. After a moment the finger was suddenly fastened to the paper, and on examination it was found to be resting on the name Henry Clay. It was thereupon conjectured that the circumstance was either purely accidental or else that some Spirit, for some purpose as yet unexplained, desired to refer to the great statesman. But this finger moved again, rapidly as before, and gain it was as suddenly arrested. On lifting the medium's finger from the paper, it was found that the word steamboat was directly under it. Once more the finger moved spasmodically over the printed sheet, and when at length it stopped abruptly, it was discovered that it pointed to the word burnt. ***It will be perceived that this is the sum of the communication from the invisible powers : ' Henry Clay, STEAMBOAT, BURNT.' Such an announcement was not, of course, anticipated by any one.*** *The eyes of the medium were closed during this performance, and she certainly could not have known, by any mode of external observation, what the words were, much less what the whole really implied. No one in the circle had any knowledge of the existence of such a steamer. One after another the members of the circle departed, and we know not that any special importance was attached to what had occurred.*

The next day, at about three o'clock, p.m., Mrs. Porter was again and unexpectedly entranced in presence of several persons, and proceeded to describe the terrible catastrophe which was then, as she affirmed, being enacted before her. ***She declared that a steamboat was burning on the Hudson River, that the name, Henry Clay, was distinctly visible,*** *and then proceeded to describe the village of Yonkers. The medium appeared to be greatly terrified by the scene, and expressed the deepest anguish on account of the loss of so many lives. It is needless to add that the public journals on*

the following morning contained the details of the mournful tragedy, so mysteriously foreshadowed and so graphically portrayed at the very hour of the fatal occurrence."

The steamboat Henry Clay caught on fire on July 28, 1852, with nearly 50 of its 500 passengers dying. If true, this account would be a very powerful case of evidence of precognition. The only shortcoming of this account is that it was written more than a year after the alleged events occurred. An account closer to July, 1852 would be better evidence. In another post I will discuss a rather similar account that is like this, but meets higher standards of evidence.

In an 1853 book we have this account by S. B. Brittan of 1852 events (one in which the name Home is misspelled as Hume):

"*On the evening of April 15th, 1852, I was at the house of Rufus Elmer, Esq., in Springfield, Mass., when David A. Wells, Professor of Electricity and Chemistry at Cambridge, was present with other intelligent gentlemen for the purpose of witnessing the mysterious phenomena. Remarkable manifestations occurred on that occasion through Daniel D. Hume. Prof. Wells and several other gentlemen, all of whom had been previously skeptical, made a written statement of what transpired in their presence, which was subsequently published in the Eastern papers. I have only space for the following extract :*

> *' **While no visible power was employed to raise the table, or otherwise move it from its position — it was seen to rise clear of the floor, and to float in the atmosphere for several seconds** as if sustained by some denser medium than air. Mr. Wells seated himself on the table, which was rocked to and fro with great violence, and at length it poised itself on two legs, and remained in this position for some thirty seconds, when no other person was in contact with the table.'*
>
> *' Occasionally we were made conscious of the occurrence of a powerful shock which produced a vibratory movement of the floor of the apartment. It seemed like the motion occasioned by distant thunder or the firing of ordnance far away — causing the tables, chairs, and other inanimate objects, and all of us to tremble in such a manner that the effect was both seen and felt. In the whole exhibition we were constrained to admit that there was an almost constant manifestation of some intelligence which seemed to be independent of the circle.'*
>
> *' During these occurrences the room was well lighted, the lamp was frequently placed on and under the table, and every possible opportunity was afforded us for the closest inspection, and we submit this one emphatic declaration : We know that we were not imposed upon nor deceived.'*

The statement from which the above is extracted, was signed by David A. Wells and others."

The statement above matches a statement in the autobiography of Daniel Dunglas Home, in which he lists the signers of the statement as Wm. Bryant, B. K Bliss, Wm. Edwards and David

A. Wells. I may note that television or movie depictions of the seances of the nineteenth century almost always fail to depict any of the more dramatic phenomena that were reported. We may see some depiction of people with their hands on a table, and the table moving a little bit, or some bell shaking. Chances are 99% that you will see a depiction failing to depict any of the more dramatic phenomena that were reported, such as tables levitating, people levitating, musical instruments playing by themselves, mysterious spirit hands appearing and objects levitated to the tops of tables. An example of the kind of the depictions we get is in Episode 3 of the Netflix series "Bodies." Similarly, 95% or more of this century's mainstream accounts of the spooky events around this time will fail to list any of the more dramatic phenomena reported.

Around Christmas of 1851 in Ohio a young orphan medium by the name of Abby Warner was charged with the crime of disturbing a church service. It seems that a service at a church was disturbed by mysterious raps one day that Abby attended. Putting Abby on trial, the state of Ohio tried to prove that Abby had caused the rapping sound, violating a law against disturbing church services. But a judge ruled that the state had failed to prove that Abby had caused the sounds. The official ruling by a judge states this:

"After three days patient investigation the guilty party is undiscovered, and thus far that investigation seems fruitless, for which the court can only express its sincere regret. Being unable, in the light of the proof to find the defendant guilty, she is discharged."

An investigation committee was organized in early 1852 to further investigate the matter of Abby Warner and the mysterious raps. Members of the committee claimed that raps occurred corresponding to their silent thoughts, an effect widely reported by others. We read that this occurred on January 5, 1852 at the office of F. M. Keith:

*"**Mental questions were then asked, one by each person at the table**, except Dr. Underhill and medium, which questions and answers were as follows:*

***By R. Partridge.** Rap five times?*

Answer. Five raps.

***By O. Dresel.** Rap four times on the back of my chair.*

Answer. Four raps on the table.

***By C. K. Skinner.** Will the spirit rap six times ?*

Answer. Six raps.

***By A. Pease.** Shall I remain with the committee during their subsequent sittings; if so give me four distinct raps?*

Answer. Four raps.

***By F. M. Keith.** Shall we continue our examination three sittings more; if so rap seven times, slow and distinct ?*

Answer. Seven raps."

A statement asserting the above was signed by these persons: F. M. KEITH, R. PARTRIDGE, A. PEASE, C. K. SKINNER. These four people are all mentioned in the quote above. Only O. Dresel failed to sign the attestation. As evidence, this meets a very high standard. We have an attestation published the same year as the reported events, quoting signed testimony apparently made on the same day as the events witnessed, with multiple named witnesses. The effect is one of five consecutive people mentally thinking of a number between about 1 and 10, with each thought-of number being followed by the same number of raps. You could explain the results by coincidence, but by a coincidence that would have a total improbability of about 1 in 10 to fifth power, about 1 in 100,000. Meeting at the same place on the next day, the same four witnesses and an additional witness attested the following:

"The committee are constrained to say, from the facts they have witnessed, that the table was caused to move by some power as yet unknown to them. That they are satisfied that neither the medium, nor any other person in the room moved it."

I have quite a few additional installments of this "Spookiest Years" series, and they will appear at intermittent intervals at various times over the next months. I may note that I am very interested in studying first-hand accounts of anomalous or hard-to-explain phenomena, particularly when they are written dated accounts by a named witness describing something very astounding he or she saw soon after he or she saw it. I am also also very interested in getting the earliest published accounts of hard-to-explain phenomena that end up being widely discussed. If you know of any cases of such accounts that you think may be of interest to me, please email me with a link to such accounts.

Be very wary of articles about the paranormal appearing in mainstream publications, which tend to peak in the days leading up to Halloween (October 31). Remember that the vast majority of such articles are written by people who are not serious scholars of the paranormal. A typical late October article about the paranormal will be written by some dilletante who has merely waded his feet in the topic of reports of the paranormal, a topic of oceanic depth.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:00 AM No comments:

Labels: levitation, mediums, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, precognition, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism, table turning

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Friday, October 13, 2023

Spookiest Years, Part 3: The Year 1851

It is time for another installment of the intermittently-appearing "Spookiest Years" series on this blog, in which I discuss reports of the paranormal appearing during particular years, with an emphasis on quoting original source materials. This time I focus on the year 1851. In 1851 the newspaper *The Spirit Messenger* continued to published reports of dramatic events at seances. Page 174 of the January 4, 1851 edition reports spooky events at seances in Boston, including raps seeming to answer questions. The January 25, 1851 edition on page reports this:

"Some eight of us were seated around a common card table. Numerous rappings were heard on the table and on the floor in various directions, in answer to different questions. Some most beautiful sentences were spelled out in the usual way. ***Soon the table was observed to move, and at the request of the company, it moved from one to three feet, more than fifty times, while the feet and hands of the 'Medium' were held fast by some of the company ! The table was frequently raised from the floor more than a foot. In one instance it stood poised on two legs more than five minutes,*** *while an examination was going on underneath for the purpose of detecting the agency by which it was moved. I took hold of it frequently while it was in this position, and found it stood quite firm. When I succeeded in bringing the side that was raised down towards the floor again, it would invariably fly back as soon as my hands were off. The 'Medium,' be it remembered, was an this time held perfectly still by one of the company."*

On page 205 of the February 1, 1851 edition, we have an account of a long seance in which mysterious raps seem to answer questions correctly. On page 310 of the May 3, 1851 edition we have this interesting account of paranormal music:

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"First there is heard low harmonious hreathings, like the hum of insects. It increases, until it resembles the softest chords of the Aeolian harp. Growing louder, it pervades the room with a full burst of the most delicious music, as of the sweetest voices and instruments. Then are distinguished the words of the song, more or less plainly, until at last the unseen choir leave the room, and the sounds recede, growing more and more distant, until they are lost. The first manifestation of this kind.... occurred In the city of Troy [in New York state] a few weeks ago, under the following impressive circumstances. It was in an intelligent family, who were all thoroughly sceptical in regard to spiritual manifestations. One day they assembled around the death-bed of a beloved member. Just as she drew her last breath, and her features were setting into the rigidity of the tomb, every person present heard this low breathing, as of angels' harps. Had it been one person, it might have been an illusion of the imagination ; but it was an entire family. The sounds increased, swelling into a harmony. whose only name was heavenly. It continued full, and sweet, and strong, as one can conceive of angelic spirits making, for about a half an hour, when it passed from the room, and gradually faded in the distance, seeming to accompany the released soul in its heavenward flight. Since that time these musical sounds have been frequently repeated in that family, and they are also heard in several places in this city and Brooklyn."

This report was made decades before the invention of the phonograph and the tape recorder. On page 392 of the July 12, 1851 edition we have an account of mysterious occurrences in Providence, Rhode Island, which include a guitar playing by itself, and also levitating about. We read this:

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► 2021 (92)
► 2020 (99)
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"The instrument was carried by the spirit towards a window, through the upper part of which a dim moonlight shone ; and then we could see the guitar perform sundry fantastic tricks for our amusement. It would move sometimes horizontally and then vertically; it would dance, and then remain at rest ; dart back into the darkness, and then push forward into the dim moonlight, until we were perfectly satisfied with its lively performances·; when it was gently laid upon the table as if the operator wished for further orders."

A similar account appears in the 1853 account here, with the author saying he saw a guitar playing by itself for an hour, as well as moving around mysteriously.

Page 17 of the edition of August 23, 1851 gives us one of the accounts of a phenomenon that would come to be extremely widely reported, and called "table tipping" or "table turning" (a diminutive phrase to describe the phenomenon, which very often included reports of table levitations or dramatic movements by untouched tables). We read this:

"There has been considerable stir in town, of late, relative to what are called ' The Tippings.' The hands of the medium are placed on a stand, and after an interval, the stand will tip in answer to questions, and will sometimes rock to and fro, and turn over upon the floor and rise again. The slighter movements of the stand appear like nothing extraordinary, as any one, without any apparent effort, by laying on his hands, can easily accomplish as much; but the more eccentric movements, such as the rocking to and fro,—the turning over and raising up of the stand, &c, are points which invariably elicit attention and inquiry, and produce the conviction that there is an influence at work beyond mere muscular effort...The 'tippings' first made their appearance in this town, in the family of Mr. John Morey, where, we believe, they have been somewhat accompanied with the Wrappings. This, however, is at present, peculiarly the case in the presence-of Mrs. French Cheney, the lady whom we have frequently alluded to in our columns, and through whom, at our request, the 'rappings' first manifested themselves in this place. She but places the tips of her fingers on the stand, and it will work itself into almost every imaginable posture, and the raps will be frequently heard much louder than when she is mesmerized [hypnotized]."

Page 163 of the November 8, 1851 edition of the *Spirit Messenger* gives an account by Charles Partridge of a meeting attended by "Judge Edmonds, Dr. and Mrs. Gray, E. Fowler and sister, Mrs. Fox and daughters, Messrs. Gordon and Cooley,

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

Notable Posts

- A Table Listing 50 Things Science Cannot Explain
- 30 Reasons for Doubting the "Brains Store Memories" Dogma
- Why We Do Not Understand the Origin of Any Adult Human Being
- A Very Strong Effect of Repeating Patterns in Mysterious Striped Orbs
- They Had Flourishing Minds But Broken Brains
- Paradoxes That Puncture Professorial Pretensions
- Humanity Prerequisites: A Table of 18 Anthropic Requirements
- When World-Class Scientists Saw Ghosts (Part 1)
- The Enigma of Veridical Near-Death Experiences
- When Natural Things Seem to Act in a Shockingly Unnatural Way
- Are Public Schools Teaching a Stealth Religion?
- The Building Blocks of Bad Science Literature
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 Cases
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
- Biological Orthodoxy Flunks the Software Test
- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

Josiah Partridge and my family," among others. We read of a dramatic series of manifestations:

"A suggestion was made to darken the room, to enable us to see the lights which are sometimes produced by the spirits. We accordingly did so; and the lights which had been desired, were at different times and in different places seen, sometimes resembling phosphorescent flames, occasionally forming luminous clouds moving about the room ; sometimes they appeared like bright, glistening stars, and at other times like sparkling crystals or diamonds, &c. Physical manifestations increased in variety and force, and continued for three hours... The card table before mentioned began to move with violent force from one side of our circle (which was large) to the other, rocking and raising up and coming down, and finally the leaf was shut up, the cover turned round to its place, the table was gently turned upside down and laid at our feet....A chair, which stood outside of our circle and several feet from any one, was suddenly moved up to the circle and back, rocked, and finally, with great rapidity, conveyed from one end of the room to the other, winding its way among the people who sat there without touching them ; and yet at times passing with fearful rapidity within an inch or two of our persons. We were touched on different parts of our persons, simultaneously, as by a human hand, so distinctly that its size and temperature could be felt; and this was repeatedly done to different persons under circumstances in which it was not possible that it was done by any one in the form.... Afterward, the bass viol and violin were raised above their heads and out of their reach, (except one end, which sometimes rested on their hand, head or shoulder, often changing,) and in this position they were played and rapped upon as by human fingers, and the lime marked as before. A dinner bell on the shelf was raised up, and rung over their heads, then taken out into the parlor and carried round the room, ringing over the heads of fifteen or twenty persons sitting in the circle there, and then into the adjoining parlor, (where there was no person,) and carried nearly its length and dropped on the floor some fifteen or twenty feet from any human being. Another small bell was taken off the shelf, rung, and placed into and taken out of the hands of several persons. A pocket handkerchief was taken from the Judge's pocket, and tied into many knots, and put back again—a table-brush was taken from the shelf and put into the hands of several persons successive and taken out again, and their hair brushed with it."

Page 184 of the November 22, 1851 edition of *The Spiritual Messenger* gives us an account from Lebanon, New Hampshire dated October 21, 1851, an account signed by a variety of

- A "Water Memory" Effect I Have Often Photographed
- 25 Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death
- Why the Origin of Language Is Inexplicable Under Orthodox Assumptions
- Visualizing a Top-Down Theory of Mind and Cosmic Connectivity
- Disastrous Blunders of the Experts
- Cosmic Coincidence Cover-up
- The Gigantic Missing Link of Biological Life
- Cosmic Fine-Tuning Visualized
- Why Machines Will Not Soon Be as Intelligent as Men
- Cloud Computing and the Concept of Non-local Consciousness
- There Is No Plausible Explanation For How Brains Can Store Very Long-Term Memory
- The Top 6 Problems With Using a Multiverse to Explain Cosmic Fitness
- "Vacuum Catastrophe" Should Be Called the Vacuum Miracle
- Why the Origin of Humans Is an Unsolved Mystery
- The Best Basis for Believing in an Afterlife Is Something Other Than Paranormal Phenomena
- Still More Dreams or Visions That Seemed to Foretell a Death
- The Evidence for Out-of-Body Experiences
- GOAL and Soul: Postulating What We Need to Explain Humans
- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

witnesses: E. F. Brewster, Ohio; S. O. Hatch, Franklin; J. C. Hatch, S. H. Williams, J. C. Bill, Julia A. Blanchard, Fidelia Blanchard, Caroline Hatch, and Julia A. Williams. We read of a meeting at the house of D. Blanchard attended by Daniel Dunglas Home, whose name is misspelled as D. D. Hume. This may be the first published account of a medium who would go on to worldwide fame, and who would pass with flying colors a series of stringent tests by the world class scientist Sir William Crookes. Compared to the later marvels observed in the presence of Home, such as Home himself levitating, the results are less dramatic. The main wonder reported (occurring under good light) is this:

"*It was suggested that they were to help in moving the table and an affirmative reply immediately followed. Then commenced larger and more decided movements—the table being slid freely about the floor and raised alternately one side and the other several inches, and at one time it was raised nearly to an angle of forty-five degrees, poised on two side legs, and then by oscillating movements the time was correctly kept to several tunes that were sung by the company.*"

Around page 198 of an 1853 book we have a discussion of someone who seemed to have been mysteriously moved in 1851 to write down a record of someone's death, a death they had never learned of from their senses. The book reproduces the letter below:

" *Fitchburg, Mass., Feb. 22, 1852.*

Mr. Charles Partridge :

Dear Sir: In reply to your letter of inquiry concerning Mr. Hooper's statement to you, I will say that, on or about the 20th of March last, Mr. Hooper told me that he had, for a number of days, been impelled to write, ' Your father, Thomas Hooper, is dead' and that, on inquiry of the Agency which influenced him to write this, when his father died ? he was further impressed to write, 'March 13th.' He also told me that, ' he thought he was wrongly impressed, because he had but a short time before received a letter from England, where his father lived, and at the time the letter was written, his father was in his usual health.'

A few weeks after Mr. Hooper made these statements to me, he showed me a letter from a sister in England, informing him that his father died ' the 13th of March.' Of the genuineness of the letter from his sister, I will also add, there can be no question. These are the simple facts in relation to this case, as I know them...

" Yours respectfully, Charles Woodhouse."

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

Other Blogs by This Author

- Head Truth
- Orb Pro

A very similar account involving a different person (a Mr. Pecard of Lockport, NY) is told on page 200 of an 1851 book by Joel Tiffany, who earned a living as an official state reporter for the State of New York. We are told that Pecard was told in a seance that his daughter had died; and that upon returning from Rochester to Lockport, he learned that this had had happened. After opening the book with much philosophical speculation, the author tells us this:

"Thus during the winter past, I have frequently been present when sounds were produced, in answer to mental, oral, and written questions, entirely disconnected with any apparent physical agency. These sounds have been produced when there were no persons present but myself to hear them, and produced on objects directly under my inspection, so that I could positively know no physical agency was employed in their production. These sounds were frequently so heavy, that is, the concussion was so great, as to cause the table, chair, sofa, or whatever they were produced upon, to vibrate so distinctly as not only to be felt, but also to be seen. While sitting in a room with others, although entirely physically detached from all present, when I could positively know no person or physical agency was connected with the chair upon which I was sitting, sounds, clear, distinct and heavy, have been produced upon my chair, causing it to vibrate, and by placing my hand upon the place where the sounds were being produced, have received the concussion on my hand, and even had communications spelled out upon the back of my hand ; and this in open daylight, and when I was in the full possession of all my physical senses. I have not unfrequently sat by a table under circumstances when I could positively know that no person, either through machinery or otherwise, was in contact with it, when every part of the table was clearly within view, in open daylight, and have heard sounds produced upon the table with so much violence, as to cause ink stands, books and pencils lying upon it, to bound up from the table with much force.

During the same period of time I have witnessed the manifestation of physical power, other than the production of sounds, without any sensible or perceptible physical agency. One class of phenomena very common is the imparting an unnatural weight to material objects. Of this class I have witnessed the holding down of tables with so much force, that they could not be raised from the floor by any application of a power ten times greater than would be required to raise their natural weight ; and I have tested the genuineness of these phenomenal in such a manner as to leave no chance for mistake or doubt."

On a later page the author recalls seeing a stand mysteriously move in a way that seemed to answer his questions, according to some code. We read this:

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Featured Post

Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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- 3D printing (1)
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- abundance (1)
- acupuncture (1)
- after death communication (2)
- age of mankind (1)
- age of universe (3)
- aging (2)
- AI (1)
- alien abductions (2)
- alien attack (1)
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

"I then arose, set my chair back and requested the spirit to answer my questions by moving the stand for an affirmative, and letting it remain at rest for a negative answer. To this it assented by moving the stand ; during the time, no person was standing within reach of it, and there was no machinery or other physical agency whatever connected with it. This I know, and the same can be attested to by all others present. I then commenced asking questions, which were all properly and correctly answered by moving the stand. This continued for the space of twenty or thirty minutes, during which time the stand in reply to every question requiring an affirmative answer was moved from four to six inches."

Later the author reports witnessing dramatic physical manifestations in Pittsburgh, seeing a heavy mahogany table being mysteriously lifted up and shaken violently. He also reports seeing in some other place a levitation and ringing of an untouched heavy bell. On another page he reports seeing this:

"All these preliminaries being settled, the bell commenced ringing, the accordion was played, the violin fingered like a guitar, a small toy whip, which happened to be lying under the table at the time, was brandished about from one end of the table to the other, (some twelve feet), and a communication given by alphabet, and all these going on at the same time — after this, the large bell which had frequently moved up and down the table, came gradually up the foot and leg of Dr. W. (who was a member of the circle), until it came to the side of the knee and there it remained suspended without any physical agency, for some moments, until every member of the circle had an opportunity of examining it in that position."

Later the author gives an account very difficult to account for by any method of trickery:

"Again, that the agencies can read our thoughts, may be inferred from the fact, that they can answer mental questions with the same facility they can oral or written ones. I have often mentally questioned these agencies in such a manner as to require affirmative and negative answers promiscuously, through a long series of questions ; and which upon the sense of chance guessing, would render it absolutely impossible for any person to answer correctly. And yet these questions have each received their appropriate answer, rendering it as certain as certain can be, that whatever influence made the sounds in answer to my questions, that influence was dictated by an intelligence which was familiar with my thoughts. Again, I have witnessed answer after answer given by alphabet, when the questions were propounded mentally, from written ones, and that too, under circumstances which precluded all possibility of the medium's knowing any thing of the nature of the questions

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
- anthropic principle (22)
- antimatter (3)
- apocalypse (5)
- apparition (76)
- apparition acting like a death notification (22)
- apparition of the living (6)
- apparition seen by multiple witnesses (16)
- apports (5)
- aquatic mega-patternization (1)
- archaeology (1)
- argument against brain storage of all memories (20)
- argument for soul (17)
- argument from evil (3)
- Artemis (1)
- artificial intelligence (7)
- artificial planets (1)
- artificial worlds (1)
- asteroid mining (1)
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- astral projection (1)
- astrobiology (2)
- astroengineering (3)
- astronomy (14)
- atheism (3)
- augmented reality (2)
- aura (1)
- austerity (1)
- Australian mystery lights (1)
- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

propounded, and in such cases, the answers given were most astonishingly appropriate and correct."

On pages 236 to 239 the author gives a ringing denunciation of slavery.

It was not until 1853 that Judge John Edmonds published his two-volume work describing accounts of witnessing paranormal phenomena. But he makes it clear that he took very careful records, and his recollections are not based only on memories, but dated notes taken earlier. In the book he says this about an 1851 event:

"On the 23d of April, 1851, I was one of a party of nine who sat around a center-table, on which a lamp with glass pendants, was burning, and another lamp was burning on the mantlepiece. And there, in plain sight of us all, that table was lifted at least a foot from the floor, and shaken backward and forward as easy as I could shake a goblet in my hands. Some of the party tried to stop it by the exercise of their strength, but in vain, so we all drew back from the table, and by the light of those two burning lamps, we saw that heavy mahogany table susi)ended in the air."

1851 saw the publication of the book *Letters to a Candid Inquirer, on Animal Magnetism,* which you can read online here. The author was William Gregory (1803-1858), a professor of chemistry at the University of Edinburgh (founded in 1582, and the sixth oldest English university). Some of the many very spooky accounts in the book are discussed in my post here.

We get a good chronicle of the mysterious events occurring in New York State and New England between 1848 to 1851 in the first half of the 1852 book by John C. Bywater entitled *The Mystery Solved, or a Bible Expose of the Spirit Rappings, Showing That They Are Not Caused by the Spirits of the Dead, But by Evil Demons or Devils*. The second half of the book (attempting a "demons did it" explanation) is pretty worthless, but the first half of the book provides some careful documentation of the mysterious events occurring between 1848 and 1852, helping to show the lack of any credible natural explanation for such events.

The events described above (involving such as table levitations and tables standing on two legs at a 45 degree angle) were dramatic, but far more dramatic things were reported in the following years, with things seeming to get more and more spectacular as the years passed, as I will discuss in later installments of this intermittently-appearing "Spookiest Years" series. For two earlier installments of this series, see my posts here and here.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:24 AM No comments:

Labels: life after death, mediums, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism

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- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
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Thursday, October 5, 2023

Quite a Few So-Called "Alien Abductions" May Be Spiritual Experiences

Netflix has an interesting new series called "Encounters" dealing with UFO sightings and similar reports of the paranormal. One episode partially deals with a reported UFO sighting at the Ariel school in Ruwa, Zimbawe. On September 16, 1994 about 60 school children between nine and twelve claimed to have seen a strange craft and strange beings near the craft. The same episode deals with Harvard professor John Mack, who interviewed some of the Ariel school children. In the 1990's John Mack started seriously studying reports of paranormal experience that are often called "alien abduction" accounts (although, as I will explain, such a term may be an inappropriate one for many of these cases). His scientist colleagues expected him to produce a paper or book suggesting that accounts of alien abductions are produced by people with mental illness. Instead, Mack produced the 1996 book "Abduction: Human Encounters With Aliens," in which he stated that the people telling such stories seem to be generally of sound mind. Mack suggested that the people may well have been reporting experiences of something that really happened, not just something that was all in their minds.

The behavior of Mack's fellow scientists was one of the most shameful episodes in the recent history of science. Mack was subjected to merciless gaslighting from fellow scientists, who treated him as if he had lost his mind or gone over to some "lunatic fringe." Mack's serious scholarship on observational reports well-worthy of study was treated as an abhorrent aberration by materialist professors eager to "sweep under the rug" such reports and prevent people from studying them. It was just more of what has gone on for more than 200 years within scientific academia: scientists senselessly ignoring important-seeming observational reports they should have been paying attention to, for the sake of maintaining a storyline consistent with their materialist dogmas and poorly grounded boasts of understanding human minds or human origins. Harvard put together some "Star Chamber" style secret committee to try and revoke Mack's credentials. In 1995 it was announced that after a year of "closed door hearings" Harvard would not discipline Mack. The article pointed out that the hearings had cost Mack more than $100,000 in legal expenses. Mack eventually died suddenly after being hit by a car.

A key question is: how much of Mack's accounts were obtained through hypnosis? On page 32 of his book "Passport to the

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

Cosmos: Human Transformation and Alien Encounters" Mack states this:

"*A modified hypnosis or relaxation exercise may be used to help focus the client's attention upon their inner experience and memories, but it should be emphasized that about 80 percent of the information is obtained through conscious recollection...We are careful not to lead individuals or to encourage them to 'produce' and abduction story --we use neutral, encouraging comments and questions.*"

This raises a question mark about the reliability of the accounts, because it is known that under hypnosis people can be extremely suggestible. A nineteenth century work describes this aspect of hypnotism, describing some hypnotized subjects:

"*When they drank water, and were told that it was milk, coffee, rum, whisky, or wormwood, they tasted it as such. Nay, after drinking it as whisky, they were told that they were drunk, and in a minute or two became, in every particular, very drunk indeed. The expression of the face was perfectly that of intoxication, and they could not walk a step without staggering or falling. They were easily made, by suggestion, to fancy themselves any other persons, and acted in character. They shot, fished, swam, lectured, and exhibited every feeling suggested to them. They were as easily made to suppose a stick to be a gun, a rod, a sword, nay, a serpent ; or a chair to be a tiger or a bear. From these animals they fled with extreme terror. They were made to see, hear, and feel a dreadful storm, and to creep for shelter under a table or a chair, supposed by them to be a house.*"

It is quite a potential problem for us to be told that 80% of reported recollections come from "conscious recollection" and that hypnosis was used to get some of the accounts. That makes it unclear whether a particular detail we hear from someone did or did not come from statements under hypnosis. A good technique would be:

(1) Whenever citing or quoting anything that a particular person said under hypnosis, always tell the reader that such a statement was made under hypnosis.
(2) If a person ever makes some sensational claim under hypnosis, attempt to verify such a claim by seeing whether it is made by the same person under more than one hypnotic session.

Unfortunately, it seems that Mack failed to follow such a technique. But we should not necessarily throw away the

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

accounts he has gathered, merely because of such imperfect methods.

Another complaint I have about Mack is his terminology. His book titles seem to overuse the term "abduction" and to presumptively use the term "aliens." A typical account in Mack's books will involve some encounter with some mysterious entity of unknown origin. Why should we be using the term "alien" to refer to such entities? In most cases no claim is being made by anyone to have learned that the strange entity encountered is from another planet. If such reports come from encounters with real mysterious entities, we do not know whether such entities are spiritual, extraterrestrial or extra-dimensional. Often the reports involve mystical-sounding or spiritual-sounding experiences that it may be inappropriate to describe as "abductions," a term with a strong criminal connotation. Mack's 1996 book should have had a less presumptive title, something such as "Human Encounters With Mysterious Entities." And Mack's use in his books of the term "alien abduction phenomenon" is unfortunate. It would have been better to have used a more general term such as "involuntary high-intensity anomalous experience."

The fact is that humans have for a very long time reported an extremely wide variety of encounters with mysterious entities:

(1) For ages humans in normal health have reported that in normal waking consciousness they suddenly and unexpectedly encountered apparitions of the dead, appearing as full or partial human figures.
(2) Very large numbers of dying people report seeing apparitions of the dead, a phenomenon sometimes called deathbed visions.
(3) Many have reported seeing mysterious humanoid figures such as Bigfoot or Yeti.
(4) In near-death experiences people report seeing a wide variety of mysterious entities that may include some numinous "Being of light," deceased relatives or deceased friends, angelic or semi-angelic figures, or various other mysterious figures.
(5) A thorough examination of the history of spiritualism will reveal very many reports of encounters with mysterious figures appearing during seances, figures often called materializations. A prominent example is the Katie King apparition or materialization well-studied by the scientist Sir William Crookes. Read the section entitled "Miss Cook's Mediumship" in the newspaper account here for a very detailed account, and my posts here, here, here and here for related information.

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

(6) The lore of the Catholic Church includes numerous stories of encounters with mysterious figures, often identified as the Virgin Mary or saints. An examination of the lore of Mahayana Buddhism would probably produce very many similar accounts.
(7) Users of certain types of drugs report seeing mysterious entities, and sometimes claim to see the same type of mysterious entities (with a very distinctive non-human appearance) whenever they take a particular type of drug.
(8) In quite a few cultures there are figures called shamans who claim to be able to go on spiritual journeys in which they may encounter mysterious entities.
(9) As discussed here, a small group of people claim to be able to practice at will something called astral projection in which they have out-of-body experiences that may involve claimed encounters with strange nonearthly intelligences.
(10) We can find in every major religion some mystics who claimed to have trips of the soul in which they encountered some superhuman reality.

People don't learn about such things (except in the briefest and the most superficial way) when studying to become psychology professors. Mack should have thoroughly studied such reports as part of his investigation into the accounts he has labeled as "alien abduction" reports. But I don't see very much evidence of such scholarship in Mack's writing. If Mack's scholarship had been deeper, he might have tended to use some more general term to describe the reports he had studied, rather than to put them all into some "alien abduction" category. But Mack was very diligent about personally interviewing people reporting anomalous experience, showing none of the "fear of hearing firsthand testimonies" we so often get from skeptics.

On pages 72-73 we hear of a person named Jean who reported very frequent reports of being taken to what she called a spaceship. She said that "sometimes it was like being beamed up" and "sometimes it was like being sucked up, sort of like a vacuum cleaner, and all of a sudden just whoosh!" The beings she claims to have encountered (in what she calls a spaceship) are described by her as "very refined presences" and "literally beings of light." On the next page we read her claims that she was given "a new cosmological system" that enabled her to "plug into Source, or God," having "a capacity to heal myself and heal other people" and become "a medium to, if you will, the Divine." The report sounds like a very spiritual affair, and we may wonder why mystical-seeming encounters such as this are put in the category of close encounters with extraterrestrials, as if some

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

purely physical encounter with a nuts-and-bolts spaceship had occurred.

On page 74 we read of an Andrea who describes an encounter beginning with a beautiful flash of light. She reports that she floated feet-first through the glass of her window, rather as if it was her "astral body" moving rather than her physical body. She recalled thinking "I'm not a body anymore," and thought "I'm light." She reports encountering strange creatures that "look like they're made of light." On page 75 a Karin reports a feeling that was like moving at ultra-fast speeds "basically tucked in a ball." We read, "For Karin, these overwhelming energies seem to have a kind of 'universal power' as if they emanate from God." The next two accounts we get (from two other people) also sound like mystical or spiritual experiences, with lots of mention of encounters with mysterious intense energies, but little mention of anything sounding like protoplasmic extraterrestrials in metal spaceships.

Here is an encounter described on page 161 of one of Mack's books. Dave reported beings who he could see only as silhouettes taking his "inner self" or "inner spirt" out of his body and taking him through large transparent tubes, "into the next plane." In the next plane there were beings that appeared luminous, like "giants" with "crystal" bodies. They had big heads with large eyes having beautiful colors. We are told, "The beings would not permit Dave to go further into the light, which seemed to be coming from a great 'inner city' of some sort, because, they told him, he was going back to the Earth plane. Dave said he was brought to this plane to show him that there was "life beyond this life," and that there are other planes of reality into which we will eventually pass. We read this:

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

"Dave and the other two people felt a warmth in this other plane, a sense of belonging there, and he did not want to come back to Earth. He described a place of overwhelming joy, without pain, filth, anger or discontent, an awesome realm where nothing and no one was above another and existence itself was like light. The realization that this was only a demonstration, and that he could not actually fully experience the light, filled Dave with a sense of loss. But he has a strong sense that after death in prior lives, it is into this other plane that he has passed and that he will return to it again when this life is over."

Any student of near-death experiences will recognize several elements in this account. They include (1) an idea of an inner self kind of traveling out of the physical body; (2) a trip through a tunnel; (3) encountering strange luminous beings; (4) a report of a kind of unearthly "city of light"; (5) being told that you must return to Earth; (6) a feeling of regret about having to go back to Earth; (7) an idea of "life beyond life" or some "higher plane" which a human will eventually reach. We may wonder: why has this very spiritual-sounding account been put in a book with a title insinuating an encounter with flesh-and-blood extraterrestrials?

We may notice here a huge contrast between the report above and the stereotypical idea of an alien abduction. Asked to describe a typical account of an alien abduction, the average person (based on press accounts) might report someone being forced into a flying saucer, tied down, and subjected to terrifying medical examinations. The account above is pretty much the exact opposite of such a terrifying encounter with a "nuts and bolts" spaceship. The report is of a very positive experience. And instead of being an experience with a physical spaceship on Earth, the person is taken to what seems unearthly spiritual realm.

On pages 163-164 we have some interesting suggestions that some of the imagery that shows up in some of the so-called "alien encounter" or "alien abduction" accounts may be symbolic imagery. So a person who reports seeing some reptile-like alien may be seeing some manifestation that symbolizes some lower intelligence or lower spiritual level, rather than a literal species that arose on some other planet with a reptile-like form.

It is widely believed that visual symbolism occurs in dreams. Dream content is worthy of serious study, and some dreams may come to humans telepathically from some external reality

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

beyond our understanding. One of the reasons I suspect such a thing is that for years I have been logging my own dreams, and I do not at all find them consisting of mere random content. During the past three years my dreams have seemed to heavily repeat themes involving life after death. I have had had more than 400 dreams in the past three years that seemed to symbolize the theme of life after death, as I report in my very long post here. Very often such themes seem to be expressed with symbolic imagery.

Some of the experiences called "alien encounters" or "alien abductions" may be mental communications from some mysterious external reality, similar to dreams, but appearing more vivid than dreams. On page 164 Mack makes an interesting speculation:

"The beings and their UFO-related 'props' may seem almost...to disguise themselves, as in Carol's encounter, through inhabiting the familiar images of the experiencer's knowledge base...One might also consider that it may be a means that the beings, or the intelligence behind them, utilize to mute the traumatic impact of the intense energies and the shock of unfamiliar images, while at the same time opening the experiencers to the mysteries of the unknown by breaking down the boundaries of their familiar world...Animal images that abductees encounter may, as they do for some native people, serve to disguise humanoid beings, but they may also represent archetypal symbols of great power and meaning that can propel them on their transformative journeys."

I often get the feeling after analyzing my dreams that some recurring element is a symbolic token representing something deeper. For example, my very frequent dreams of being on a bus, train, boat or aircraft may symbolize traveling to some unearthly realm. My very frequent dreams of being on an elevator or escalator may symbolize going to some higher realm of existence. My very frequent dreams about crossing some border or barrier and going to some other side of something may symbolize some an eventual trip to some Other Side of an afterlife. Let us imagine some higher intelligence (possibly spiritual in nature) wanting to convey to someone an idea of some encounter with some higher reality of great power and knowledge. Such a message might be conveyed through modern icons and symbols such as UFO encounters, entering into a spaceship, encountering a humanoid creature with a huge head and giant eyes, and so forth. Perhaps just as we should often ask "what does it symbolize?" when analyzing dreams, we

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

should ask "what does it symbolize?" when analyzing some reports sounding like encounters with extraterrestrials.

Continuing to use the word "alien abductions" to refer to a variety of experiences that may or may not provide evidence of visiting extraterrestrials, on page 237 Mack says, "In this chapter I will try to show how the alien abduction phenomenon can potentially be one of the most powerful agents of spiritual growth, personal transformation, and expanded awareness that is now affecting people on this planet." A bit later (after quoting someone referring to "Divine Source") Mack states, "Sometimes abductees perceive, or are told by the beings, that their (the 'beings') true nature is a kind of energy form, but that they have to become embodied to play this intermediary role between humans and Source. " On the next page we read, "Abductees sometimes express the conviction that the Earth is not their true Home, which is in another realm outside of time and space." Such an idea is frequently expressed in accounts of near-death experiences.

On page 244 one of the persons described as an "alien abductee" describes a scenario under which humans choose to become incarnated as humans here on Earth, possibly for reasons such as spiritual or moral growth. Two pages later another "abductee" expresses a similar idea. The underlying idea is one that has often been suggested by dreams and near-death experiences, as I discuss in my post here. On page 251 we have one of the "abductees" describing a "choice of whether to come back to your earthly body" choice that sounds like a very common motif of near-death experiences. When describing such things, Mack fails to point out resemblances between such experiences and other types of spiritual experiences (such as near-death experiences) that are never called "alien abduction" episodes. We get the impression that Mack was very diligent in studying the people he interviewed, but was not much of a scholar of the more general topic of paranormal or spiritual experiences. Doing a little better about drawing connections, on page 256 he states this:

"*The abduction experiences affect profoundly the experiencers' sense of who or what they are as beings in the cosmos. Their transformation, which they attribute directly to their encounters with the infinite or the creative Source, is often expressed in the ecstatic language generally associated with mysticism or other experiences of transcendence.*"

On the next page we are told that "when they no longer deny their experiences and confront them honestly, abductees tend

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

to lose their fear of death." We hear of one "abductee" claiming to have made contact with her deceased son.

The more we hear about these people describing their experiences as factors producing spiritual growth and worldview deepening, the more we should tend to think poorly of those who tried to gaslight Mack and his subjects, and who tried to suggest that Mack was guilty of malpractice by not labeling his subjects as psychotics, and not prescribing them anti-psychotic medication.

A very interesting possibility is that some of the strange events described while someone is under hypnosis (and sometimes categorized as "alien abduction experiences") may be neither fantasy nor recollections of encounters with extraterrestrials, but instead what may be examples of what used to be called "traveling clairvoyance." During the first half of the nineteenth century, when hypnosis was called "Mesmerism," "animal magnetism" or "somnambulism," there would often seem to occur astonishing displays of clairvoyance by people under hypnosis. The hypnotist would invite the hypnotized person to kind of "go with him" on a mental trip to some place the hypnotist knew well, but the hypnotized person had no knowledge of. The hypnotized person would often describe the place with astonishing accuracy, and might describe details about the actions of its current occupants that were quite unknown to the hypnotist, but which would subsequently be verified as being correct. It was rather as if some power of the mind to travel outside of the body and explore the external world was being unlocked.

When some hypnotized person asked about an alien abduction describes seeing some beings of light and visiting some unearthly realm, he may use the present tense. The hypnotist will tend to interpret this as some recollection of some weird encounter that previously happened. But what is occurring may be no recollection of a past experience, but instead an example of traveling clairvoyance or something like astral projection in which the hypnotized person is temporarily unshackled from his bodily limits, and is able to make contact with realities beyond our planet, realities that may be spiritual or involving some other dimension. Such an idea is unthinkable only to those who deny the existence of the human soul. During near-death experiences there seems to be a travel of a human soul beyond the body. So why should we should exclude the possibility for such a thing to a happen under hypnosis, particularly since there is so much nineteenth century evidence that under hypnosis certain subjects could display all kind of

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

wonders such as immunity to physical pain and traveling clairvoyance?

There are quite a few attempts to shoe-horn so-called "alien abduction" accounts into a "nuts and bolts" kind of explanation of visiting metal spaceships from other planets. Such attempts often involve ignoring what was reported. For example, in a book on alien abduction studies an author says, "When abductees described communication with occupants, it was almost always accomplished telepathically; they said they received 'impressions' that their minds converted to words." That already takes you out of the world of materialism and its "brains make minds" claims, into the world of psychic phenomena. Again we have a parallel with near-death experiences, in which people abundantly tell us that some idea was received telepathically, rather than by hearing some spoken words.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:33 AM No comments:

Labels: alien abductions, extraterrestrial life, hypnotic trance, paranormal phenomena, UFO, UFOs

Sunday, October 1, 2023

Spookiest Years, Part 2: The Year 1850

In part 1 of this "Spookiest Years" series, which you can read here, I first discussed how it is very important to search for the earliest documents describing any extraordinary or seemingly supernatural or seemingly paranormal events. Turning my attention to the famous mysterious raps first reported in Hydesville, New York and nearby Rochester, New York, I was able to find what is the very earliest document written on this topic. That document (which you can read here) had the great virtue of having witness statements written within a few weeks of the start of the phenomenon. I described and quoted from the document in my previous post, and gave some reasons why it turns out to be remarkably strong evidence that something utterly inexplicable to science was occurring in Hydesville, NY beginning about March 31, 1848.

The immediate aftermath of the Hydesville affair occurred rather slowly and gradually but was very dramatic, with reports of the paranormal spreading from Hydesville, NY to nearby Rochester, NY, and to other places in New York and Massachusetts and Connecticut such as Bridgeport. After a less-than-comprehensive search, I could find only one 1849 account of the paranormal published in 1849 (excluding the *Celestial Telegraph* book mentioned below which may come from either 1849 or 1850), although some accounts published in 1850 refer to spooky events of 1849. In the "Strange Manifestations"

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

section on page 155 of the periodical here (the February 3, 1849 edition of the *Univercoelum and Spiritual Philosopher)* we have this reference to mysterious sounds:

"*We have recently heard through various and individual mediums of the most respectable character, of some strange manifestations now occurring in Rochester, this State. The manifestations are said to have commenced in the village of Hydesville, Wayne county, in April last.They are said to consist of certain noise...the agency by which they are caused being entirely invisible!...The noises, we are informed, purport to be from departed spirits in answers to questions that are propounded to them. When a question is asked, they give a rap for an affirmative, while for a negative there is no sound heard. They also, as it said, have a way of communicating by way of the alphabet. When the interrogator, saying over the letters consecutively, comes to the letter which begins the word or substance, a rap will be heard, and in the same way succeeding letters will be indicated, until sometimes long sentences will be spelt out...As to the actual fact of these manifestations, we think there cannot be a shadow of doubt, if the numerous concurrent and direct testimonies which we have had from respectable persons on this subject, are deserving of any weight.*"

I found numerous 1850 accounts of mediums and mysterious raps and mysterious movements of objects, many of which rather seem to be kind of events slowly growing from the seeds of the Hydesville phenomenon. One such document on this topic that I have been able to find is the 1850 book *Explanation and History of the Mysterious Communion With Spirits Comprehending the Rise and Progress of the Mysterious Noises in Western New York, Generally Received as Spiritual Communications* by Eliab W. Capron and Henry D. Barron, which you can read here. Chapter II of the book gives an account of the Hydesville rappings matching that of the 1848 E. E. Lewis booklet quoted in my previous post (the booklet you can read here), and includes a long quote matching the quote from Duesler in that booklet.

Chapter V of the book starts to tell us what seems to be the earliest available detailed account of the mysterious rapping phenomena and similar phenomena spreading to Rochester NY, not far from Hydesville, NY where the rapping phenomena was first widely reported. We read that some of the Fox family moved to Rochester, and we read this: "Not long after it began to be heard by this family in Rochester, it began to be heard in other houses in the same city, and among others, in the house of a Methodist clergyman. Rev. A. H. Jarvis, where the same sounds have continued from that time to this, as they have in

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

other places and houses." Soon thereafter we read this, referring to the town of Auburn, NY, 62 miles from Rochester:

"Hardly a week passes without our receiving authentic information of some new place where these occurrences have commenced. We are informed of at least six families in Auburn who hear more or less of the same sounds."

It seems that people soon devised a system by which the alphabet was recited, and when mysterious raps were heard after a particular letter was recited, that letter was written down. Soon people were reporting intelligent communications coming from the raps. A minister reported that a man received word by such mysterious means that his child had died. The claim was soon confirmed. Soon a public meeting was held at the Corinthian Hall in Rochester. According to a New York Weekly Tribune account of December 8, 1849, quoted by Barron and Capron, many witnesses reported hearing mysterious raps at such a meeting, the source of which could not be determined. The newspaper quote mentions the formation of various committees to investigate the matter, without any resolution of how the sound originated, and with the sounds being reported coming from a variety of places such as walls and floors. We have this impressive-sounding quote as part of the quoted newspaper account:

"On Friday evening, after the lecture, three of the Committee, viz : Hon. A. P. Hascall, D. C. McCallum, and William Fisher, repaired to the house of a citizen and pursued their investigations still farther. There were nearly a score of persons present. The members of the Committee wrote many questions on paper, which no person present knew the purport of, and they were answered correctly. At times they would ask mentally and would receive the answers with equal correctness and they were fully satisfied that there was something present manifesting intelligence beyond the persons visible."

I tried to find the original newspaper quote cited to make sure the quotation was accurate. It seems that there was a daily publication called the New York Daily Tribune, and a weekly publication called the New York Weekly Tribune, published only on Saturday. There seemed to be no account of this event in the New York Daily Tribune of December 8, 1849, but I was unable to find a copy of the Saturday-edition New York Weekly Tribune for December 8, 1849. But we can assume the above quote is accurate, as it also appears in an 1852 book, which on pages 12 to 15 makes an even fuller quote from the story on this event in the New York Weekly Tribune for December 8, 1849, one noting numerous witnesses doing thorough examinations, and finding nothing to explain the phenomenon of the raps.

At the conclusion of Chapter VI we have this impressive-sounding summary:

"When we take into consideration the facts that this matter has now been spreading for two years — that every means have been tried in private circles, and committees appointed by public meetings — that all have failed to discover any thing like collusion — we may safely assert that in regard to the sounds merely — the following facts are established beyond dispute, viz: That the sounds are heard in various places and at various times — that those sounds are not made by, or under the control of any person or persons, although manifested in the presence of particular persons ; and that they evince a remarkable degree of intelligence. These facts, among those who have carefully investigated are no longer disputed."

On page 53 one of the co-authors gives an account from his personal journal. The account gives details that seem to exclude any explanation involving a person making sounds by cracking of the joints, or anyone using machinery to make sounds. We read this statement from the journal of E. W. Capron:

"*On the 23d of November, 1848, 1 went to the city of Rochester on business. I had previously made up my mind to investigate this so called mystery, if I should have an opportunity. In doing so, I had no doubt but what I possessed shrewdness enough to detect the trick, as I strongly suspected it to be, or discover the noise if it should be unknown to the inmates ot the house.*

A friend of mine, John Kedzie, of Rochester, who I had long known as a skeptic in regard to any such wonders, invited me to go with him to hear it. I accepted the invitation with a feeling that was far from serious apprehension of communicating with anything beyond my power to discover.

Before I heard the sound, we seated ourselves around a table. As soon as we got quiet, I heard a slight but distinct rapping on the floor, apparently on the under side. Although I concluded that such a sound might be made by machinery, I could see no possible motive in the family taking so such pains to deceive people, as they received nothing but annoyance and trouble in return for their pains. I proceeded to ask some questions and they were answered very freely and correctly. I asked if it would rap my age ? It was done correctly. I then took my memorandum book from my pocket and wrote my questions so that no person could know the nature of the questions. I would write ; ' rap four times ; rap one ; rap seven ;' and to each and every question I got a correct answer. I then laid aside my book and proceeded to ask similar test questions mentally, and as before, received correct answers."

So this is the second case in the very early literature in which someone reports getting replies from the mysterious raps that could not possibly have come from some nearby faker, either because the answers given are those known only by the person asking, or because the question itself was never orally stated so that some nearby faker could have faked an answer. On page 69 we have evidence of a phenomenon beyond mere rapping. We read this:

"Wednesday Evening, June 20th. Present six persons and none of the family of Mr. Fox in town. The rapping was heard very freely by all. The table moved on the floor with no person touching it — moved to the distance of a foot or more and back, in various directions. At our request the table (which was a very light one) was held down to the floor so that it required the whole strength of a man to move it from its position. We also held one side, and requested, if there was power to do it, that it would be drawn away from us; this was done and our strength was not sufficient to hold it ...The table was then raised from the floor on one side, and there stood, although we used considerable strength to push it down. While the table stood in that position, by placing our hands upon it we would feel a quick, tremulous motion like the action of a galvanic battery. The witnesses present at this time were Miss Mary M. Bennett, H. D, Barron, Mrs. Mary Miller. Miss Amanda Hoskins, Mrs. Sarah A. Tamlin, and L. W. Capron."

Fantastic as this account sounds, very similar results were recorded by very many observers in the years ahead. Notice how impossible it is to explain such a result as some kind of joint cracking of one of the Fox sisters. For one thing, we read that none of the Fox family was even in town. We also read of effects much beyond mere rapping: effects such as tables mysteriously moving and rising up in the air.

On page 70 we learn of another impressive effect:

"Sunday Evening, October 7th. This evening we were directed to go into the hall and take the guitar. We went, and while there the guitar was played by unseen hands, and played so exquisitely too that it seemed more like far distant music to one just aroused from midnight slumber, than the music of an instrument a few feet from us. Several tunes were thus played, while not a person in the room knew how to play a tune on that or any other instrument. Witnesses present this evening at the house of Mr. Bennet, Mrs. Burton Straight, of Troy, Bradford county, Penn., Mrs. G. B. Bennett R. M C. Capron, E. W. Capron, and H. D. Barron, of Auburn."

Here is a tale that many would say is too wondrous-sounding to be believed: an account of a guitar playing by itself in the middle of the nineteenth century. But why dismiss the account, when something very similar was reported by one of the leading scientists of that century? Sir William Crookes was the co-discoverer of the element thallium, and the inventor of the Crookes tube that was the technological ancestor of every computer, tablet device and smartphone. On page 2 of his 1871 work *Experimental Investigations on Psychic Force*, Sir William Crookes states this about the medium Daniel Dunglas Home:

"Among the remarkable phenomena which occur under Mr. Home's influence, the most striking, as well as the most easily tested with scientific accuracy, are — (1) the alteration in the weight of bodies, and (2) the playing of tunes upon musical instruments (generally an accordion, for convenience of portability) without direct human intervention, under conditions rendering contact or connection with the keys impossible. Not until I had witnessed these facts some half-dozen times, and scrutinized them with all the critical acumen I possess, did I become convinced of their objective reality."

Crookes then describes an experiment done at Crookes' home, using an accordion Crookes bought himself. There were four other witnesses, including William Huggins and Edward William Cox, both fellows of the Royal Society, the leading scientific organization in England. The accordion was placed in a cage, and Home merely touched one end of it, the end on the opposite side of the keyboard. The accordion was heard to play by itself. On page 5 Crookes says this:

"But the sequel was still more striking, for Mr. Home then removed his hand altogether from the accordion, taking it quite out of the cage, and placed it on the hand of the person next to him. The instrument then continued to play, no person touching it and no hand being near it."

Crookes notes on page 6 observing an apparent levitation:

"I and two of the others present saw the accordion distinctly floating about in the cage with no visible means of support. This was repeated a second time, after a short interval."

What could have caused Crookes in 1871 to have made such a test, a test of whether an accordion could play by itself? It was the fact that very many witnesses had reported similar effects in the previous 20 years. The report I quoted above from E. W. Capron may be the first report ever made of such a wonder, the only difference being that he reported a guitar playing by itself.

On page 351 of his 1855 book, Capron has a letter by N. P. Tallmadge describing another case of a guitar playing by itself:

"The guitar was touched softly and gently, and gave forth sweet and delicious sounds, like the accompaniment to a beautiful and exquisite piece of music. It then played a sort of symphony in much louder and bolder tones. And, as it played, these harmonious sounds, becoming soft, and sweet, and low, began to recede, and grew fainter and fainter, till they died away on the ear in the distance. Then they returned, and grew louder and louder and nearer, till they were heard again in full and gushing volume as when they commenced."

Later Capron gives this startling account:

" Saturday Evening, October 20th. This evening we had asked for some different demonstrations, and our request was complied with. We heard the sounds on the wall, bureau, table, floor, and other places, as loud as the striking with a hammer. The table was moved about the room, and turned over and turned back. Two men in the company undertook to hold a chair down, while, at their request a spirit moved it, and notwithstanding they exerted all their strength, the chair could not be held still by them. As we sat by the table, the cloth was removed to a different part of the room. The combs of several ladies were taken from their heads and put into the heads of others, and afterwards the combs returned to their owners, and placed in the hair as before."

The previous several paragraphs have been a "corroborating accounts" digression. Let us return back to year 1850, to examine some more literary documents from that time. 1850 was the publication year of a major work on the paranormal, Catherine Crowe's *The Night Side of Nature, or Ghosts and Ghost Seers,* which you can read here. But Crowe apparently failed to make any mention of the rap phenomena involving the Fox sisters, possibly because of its recency, and because mediums were not yet reporting something coming under any category of ghost seeing.

In 1850 there appeared a periodical called the *Spirit Messenger*. It started out mainly as a vehicle for the teachings of Andrew Jackson Davis, an astonishing anomaly in American literature who was called the Poughkeepsie Seer. At a very early age the untutored Davis seemed to produce literary output of astonishing insight. He also would seem to go into trances, have visions and display clairvoyance. Telling his tale would require a separate post. As early as early as September 7, 1850 the *Spirit Messenger* began to report striking observations of the

paranormal. We read on page 35 of a professor who had an extremely strange compulsion one day to move his bed. That very night he found that a large beam had fallen just on the spot where the bed previously was. On the same page we read of a young naval lieutenant who became convinced that his brother very far away had died on August 12 at 6:00. Later this was confirmed to be true.

In the next edition of the Spirit Messenger, dating from September 14, 1850, we read this on page 44:

"In accordance with intentions previously expressed, our renders shall now have the result of our inquiries, into the nature and character of the manifestations we witnessed at the house of J. R Mettler, in Bridgeport, Conn. The sounds and demonstrations generally, together with the mode of communication adopted, are intrinsically the same as those which attend the ladies of the Fox family, at Rochester. In this case, the medium of communication is a young man, of light complexion and nervous temperament, who has been somewhat distinguished as a clairvoyant. His name is Henry Gordon. From him we learn, that in the incipient stages of the phenomena manifested in his presence, his attention was often attracted by sounds, resembling those produced by the dropping of water from some point of elevation, to the floor of the room he occupied. The sounds, which he could trace to no visible agency, gradually increased in frequency, variety and loudness, and were occasionally attended by startling phenomena, such as the sudden and unaccountable moving of chairs, tables, and other articles of furniture."

We read of messages being spelled out, apparently by some system in which the alphabet is recited, and raps or other sounds occur after particular letters are spoken. Page 54 of the September 21, 1850 edition describes a seance involving the Fox sisters in Rochester. Page 59 of the September 28, 1850 edition has a correspondent report of a seance with glorious paranormal music and mysterious mists seeming to form into human heads. On page 14S of the December 14, 1850 edition we have an account that claims a clairvoyant went into a trance and then spoke just as you would expect the brother of a nearby person to speak, while claiming to be controlled by that brother. Page 157 of the December 21, 1850 edition has a similar account.

In 1850 there was published an anonymous book entitled "Philosophy of modern miracles, or, the relations of spiritual causes to physical effects : with especial reference to the mysterious developments at Bridgeport." You can read the book at www.archive.org, which lists S. B. Brittan as the author. S. B.

Brittan was the author of the 1865 opus *Man and His Relations*, which I review here, calling it a little-known classic of parapsychology. S. B. Brittan also wrote an 1853 book (under his own name) sounding like the 1850 "Philosophy of modern miracles." The 1850 "Philosophy of modern miracles" book has this very dramatic opening:

"That many strange and startling phenomena — displays of a mysterious power and intelligence — have of late occurred, in various parts of the United States, is a fact too well authenticated to admit of rational controversy. At Rochester, Auburn and New York, Stratford and Bridgeport, Ct. — and other places which need not be mentioned in this connection — a succession of explosive sounds are frequently or constantly occurring, which appear to proceed from some intelligence that is more than mortal. These invisible agents exhibit at times a power to put ponderable objects in motion ; they are intimately acquainted with the minutest circumstances of individual experience, and have an unfailing memory of all the Past. They penetrate and disclose the secrets of the human soul ; the most opaque substances are transparent before them, and they have a power to unlock the Future and read from the page of Destiny."

What I find striking about this book is the author's repeated claims that the paranormal events described are so well-authenticated and documented that there is no need to review the evidence for them. This suggests the documents I quote here are only a small fraction of the documents around this time (1850) that made similar attestations to inexplicable events. Most of the book consists of speculations about the mysterious paranormal events that seemed to be "the talk of the town" around 1850. On page 41 we have this statement:

"*It is well known that during the past year the residence of Rev. Dr. Phelps, in Stratford, has been the theater of some unusual exhibitions, in which an invisible power has revealed its presence, by putting numerous ponderable objects in motion — often displaying great apparent violence. These strange phenomena occur at all hours of the day as well as at night. The facts are abundantly sustained by the most reliable testimony, Mr. Phelps is a divine, of the Presbyterian order, and eminent alike for his strict orthodoxy and exemplary piety ; besides, many intelligent gentlemen have visited the family mansion, and been witnesses of these marvelous exhibitions. Among others the Editor of the Derby Journal, and Rev. Mr. Brown, the distinguished pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Bridgeport, may be referred to as having made these phenomena the subject of a careful investigation."*

The account is repeated by another author (Eliab Capron) at greater length in Chapter VII of the book here, and also repeated by an 1856 book quoting Phelps as saying this:

"'The phenomena consisted in the moving of articles of furniture in a manner that could not be accounted for. Knives, forks, spoons, nails, blocks of wood, &c., were thrown in different directions about the house. They were seen to move from places and in directions which made it certain that no visible power existed by which the motion could be produced. For days and weeks together, I watched these strange movements, with all the care, and caution, and close attention, which I could bestow. I witnessed them hundreds and hundreds of times, and I know that in hundreds of instances they took place when there was no visible power by which the motion could have been produced. Scores of persons, of the first standing in the community, whose education, general intelligence, candor, veracity and sound judgment, none will question, were requested to witness the phenomena, and, if possible, help us to a solution of the mystery. But as yet no solution has been obtained....With the most thorough investigation which I have been able to bestow upon it, aided by gentlemen of the best talents, intelligence and sound judgment, in this and in many neighboring towns, the cause of these strange phenomena remains yet undiscovered."

On page 45 the author gives this testimony regarding Andrew Jackson, who died in 1845:

"A few moments elapsed and the sounds were heard — gradually becoming louder and more frequent — and soon there came — from the dim invisible — the announcement that Gen. Andrew Jackson was present, and would converse with the writer. The General here declared that he had produced the sensation experienced in the morning, which I had erroneously attributed to a material cause. Desiring some further evidence that the old Hero was really present, he proceeded to state that I voted for him on occasion of his last election to the Presidency, and, moreover, that I had never voted for any other President, before or since. The General was then requested to designate the place where we last met, prior to his separation from the body, whereupon he replied, ' at the Brooklyn Navy Yard ' — all of which statements are strictly true. At my request the table was moved in a powerful manner, and in various directions — the motion being accompanied by a noise that might have been heard in the adjoining apartment."

A person trying to trace the exact sequence of spooky events arising around 1850 and in the next few years should consult the 1855 work here by E. W. Capron, who gives a very detailed history of such events in the first three hundred pages of his book. We read of the spread of spooky phenomena between 1849 and 1854 from Rochester, New York to Auburn, New York and to other places such as New York City, Providence, Boston, Troy, Cincinnati, Buffalo, and Waterford, New York. The book details the extreme malice directed by the press towards those participating in the events, which apparently went as far as breaking into a house, smashing a window and threats of murder.

1850 saw the publication of the remarkable work *The Celestial Telegraph* by Louis Alphonse Cahagnet (that at least is the date listed on one of the available editions, with another available edition failing to list a publication date). Cahagenet experimented with hypnotism, often called in his day "magnetism" or "animal magnetism" or "somnambulism." Like many preceding him, he seemed to find some subjects with clairvoyance that could be demonstrated when the subjects were hypnotized. After discussing experiences with several entranced visionaries, on pages 51-52 Cahagnet introduces us to Adele Magnot, telling us that he would hypnotize her, and that she would not remember what occurred when she was hypnotized. He introduces her as follows (using the word "magnetic sleep" for a hypnotic trance):

"We are now come to our best and most powerful ecstatic ; the one whose light has opened our eyes ; the one who refuses no spiritual experiment. Theology, metaphysics, psychology, she answers all in a sense tinctured with neither pride nor error. Should the materialist not obtain from her the proofs he desires, he can not accuse her of entangling the question, or of bad faith. For several years past, in her magnetic sleep, she lives with the beings of the other world ; give her but the Christian and surname of the deceased persons, no matter at what period we desire her to perceive or consult, and she sees and converses with them at will. Hitherto, she has never failed in one experiment, and we shall be astonished at her clairvoyance, and the exact details she gives of persons who have departed this life."

Cahagenet provides us with 17 cases in which Adele was asked to describe a deceased person she knew nothing about, and seemed to describe the person with great accuracy, judging by the statements of people who knew the person asked about. To see links to the pages listing these cases, you can read my long

and very interesting post "Visions of the Entranced 'Spirit Seers' " here.

In the later months of 1850 *The Spiritual Messenger* started to document the spread of what it called spiritual manifestations. The edition of December 21, 1850 records a seance in Auburn NY in March of 1850 in which a request is made to provide the last words of a dying person, and a correct answer coming from raps.

Additional installments of this "Spookiest Years" series will appear at various intermittent intervals on this blog. I will continue to open "hidden boxes" containing the "Forbidden History" of the nineteenth century's spooky occurrences, important-seeming narratives that have been senselessly excluded from the pages of textbooks of history, psychology, biology and physics.

Postscript: Below is a link for the first page of *The Liberato*r of December 14, 1849.

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84031524/1849-12-14/ed-1/seq-1/

When you go to page 4 using the link below, you will see the story below:

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84031524/1849-12-14/ed-1/seq-4/

Here is the news story that appeared on that page:

"*From the New York Tribune.*

COMMUNICATIONS WITH SPIRITS IN WESTERN NEW YORK.

Knowing that the public mind, in various locations in Western New York, has been somewhat agitated on account of certain sounds, called by some ' mysterious,' we shall offer no apology for making the following plain statement of facts in regard to our knowledge of the matter.

The sounds were first heard about two years since, and have not yet ceased, but seem to be spreading from one place to another, and gradually claiming the attention of the public mind. When first heard, they were manifested by a simple hollow-sounding rap upon the floor of a house. This rapping was continued every night for a long time, and finally commenced in the day-time. It was at first entirely unintelligible to the inhabitants of the house.

At length, a little girl said, ' Now do as I do,' and snapped her finger three times. She was answered by three raps. On repeating it, she found that it invariably repeated the number she made herself. Another person said, 'Now count ten,' (one of the children.) It was done correctly. Another was tried with like success. As it began to display signs of intelligence, the family became alarmed, and the females all left the house at night. The neighbors were called in, but there was no cessation of the sounds. The excitement became intense, and atone time, it is said, nearly or quite three hundred persons assembled to discover from whence the sounds proceeded. The house was thoroughly examined from garret to cellar, but, while the sounds continued, no one ever discovered the operator. At length, it was discovered that every time a question was put that required an affirmative, a rap was heard—for a negative—no sound.

The question was put— ' Are you a spirit ?' The answer was by rapping—three raps. By this means they found that it purported to be the spirit of a man. Many expedients were resorted to by which to find out the name of the man whose spirit was making these manifestations. At length a stranger asked, 'lf I will call the alphabet, beginning with A, will you rap when I come to the first letter of his

name?' The answer was affirmative. He then commenced, 'A, B, C,' —when he came to C, there was a rap. Again he went on, and it rapped at H, and in that way he spelled out Charles Rasme. As before stated, these sounds have, from that time, been heard in various families in that place, and in the cities of Auburn and Rochester, and various places in the country. Although confined to this rapping sound, the mode of communication has gradually improved, so that many very curious and astonishing sentences have been spelled by the use of the alphabet. It no longer purports to be the spirit of one man or person, but when an individual makes the inquiry, ' Who is it that wishes to communicate with me,' they will generally get the name of some friend or relative—a mother, father, sister or brother—who has passed from visible existence. Many persons have made the trial, and have had names spelled out to them of their friends, unknown to any persons present. Strangers have tried the experiment, and had their names spoiled out before any persons present knew it, or where they came from.

In each family where the sounds appear, there seem to be some one or two, whose presence is necessary to insure communications freely. Generally we find that these persons are susceptible to magnetic influences, and clairvoyant, although we have heard it where there were none that had ever been magnetized, or were known to be clairvoyant. In the family of Mr. Granger of Rochester, —a citizen well known there, —the communications could be had with any two of the family previous to any of them being placed under the magnetic influence, but after a daughter was magnetized and became clairvoyant, no communication could be had without her presence. No person had ever been magnetized in the family where it first appeared.

We first became acquainted with these manifestations about one year since, and we have taken every opportunity to discover, if possible, what it is. We have become convinced that these three facts there is no disputing, viz: The sounds, the intelligence, and the absence of any collusion or deception in the matter.

Some two weeks since, we were in company with some persons who were getting communications from the invisible communicator, when a message was spelled out to us to the import that the matter should be made more public—that the time had arrived for the people to investigate the whole affair—that it was a thing which will ultimately become known to all men, and that we should immediately take measures to have it investigated. The directions were then minutely given by these spirits, as they purport to be, and which we are willing to be lieve are, until we have as much proof to the contra ry as it requires to bring us to this conclusion. These directions will appear in the following history, as they were fully and strictly followed. The great object was to start investigation, and clear those who had been hearing it for the last two years from the imputation of fraud and deception.

Accordingly, on the evening of November 14, a lecture was delivered in Corinthian hall, in the city of Rochester, and a full history of the rise and progress of these strange manifestations given. During the relation of these facts, the sounds were distinctly heard by the persons in the hall.
After the lecture, a committee was chosen by the audience, composed of the following persons—A. J. Combs, Daniel Marsh, Nathaniel Clark, Esq., A. Judson, and Edwin Jones.

On the following- evening, the committee reported, in substance, as follows:—That without the knowledge of the persons in whose presence the manifestations are made, the committee selected the hall of the Sons of Temperance for the investigation—that the sound on the floor near where the two ladies stood was heard as distinctly as at other places, and that part of the Committee heard the rapping on the wall behind them—that a number of questions were asked which were answered not altogether right nor altogether wrong—that in the afternoon, they went to the house of a private citizen, and while there, the sounds were heard on the outside (apparently) of the front door, after they had entered, and on the door of a closet By placing the hand on the door, there was a sensible jar felt when the rapping was heard. One of the Committee placed one of his

hands upon the feet of the ladies, and the other on the floor, and though the feet were not moved, there was a distinct jar on the floor. On the pavement and on the ground the same sound was heard —a kind of double rap, as if a stroke and rebound were distinguishable. When the ladies were separated at a distance, no sound was heard ; but when a third person was interposed between them, the sounds were heard. The ladies seemed ready to give every opportunity to the Committee to investigate the cause fully, and would submit to a thorough investigation by a committee of ladies, if desired. They all agreed that the sounds were heard, but they entirely failed to discover any means by which it could be done.

After this report and some discussion on the sub feet, the audience selected another Committee, composed of the following persons—Dr. H. H. Langworthy, Hon. Frederick Whittlesey, D. C. McCallum, William Fisher, of Rochester, and Hon. A. I. Hascall, of Leroy. At the next lecture, this Committee reported that they went into the investigation at the office of Chancellor Whittlesey, and they heard the sound on the floor, on the wall and door— that the ladies were placed in different positions, and, like the other Committee, they were wholly unable to tell from what the sounds proceeded, or how they were made—that Dr. Langworthy made observations with a stethescope, to ascertain whether there was any movement of the lungs, and found not the least difference when the sounds were made; and that there was no kind of probability or possibility of their being made by ventriloquism, as some had supposed— and they could not have been made by machinery. Again, after this report, another committee was formed, from persons who had opposed in the meeting all pretensions to there being any thing but a trick.

This Committee was composed of Dr. E. P. Langworthy, Dr. J. Gales, Wm. Fitzhue, Esq., W.L. Burtis, and L. Kenyon. This Committee met at the rooms of Dr. Gates at the Rochester House, and appointed a Committee of Ladies, who took the young women into a room, disrobed them, and examined their persons and clothing, to be sure that there were

no fixtures about them that could produce the sounds. When satisfied on this point, the Committee of Ladies tried some other experiments, and gave the young ladies the following certificate:— 'When they were standing on pillows, with a handkerchief tied round the bottom of their dress, tight to the ancles, we all heard the rapping on the wall and floor distinctly.' (Signed,)
Mrs. Stone,
Mrs. J. Gates,
Miss M. P. Lawrence.

In the evening, the Committee, through their chairman, Dr. Langworthy, made a very full report of their examinations during the day. They reported that they had excluded all friends of the two ladies from the Committee room, and had the examination only in presence of the Committee of gentlemen, and ladies chosen by them. Notwithstanding all this precaution, these sounds were heard when the ladies stood on large feather pillows, without shoes, and in various other positions, both on the floor and on the wall,- —that a number of questions were asked, which, when answered, were generally correct. Each member of the Committee reported separately, agreeing with and corroborating the first statements.

Thus, by three days of the strictest scrutiny, by means of intelligence, candor and science, were the persons in whose presence these sounds are heard acquitted| of all fraud.

On Friday evening, after the lecture, three of the Committee, viz: Hon. A. P. Hascall, D. C. McCallum, and William Fisher, repaired to the house of a citizen, and pursued their investigations still farther. There were nearly a score of persons present. The members of the Committee wrote many questions on paper, which no persons present knew the purport of, and they were answered correctly. At times they would ask mentally, and would receive the answers with equal correctness, and they were fully satisfied that there was something present manifesting an intelligence beyond the persons visible.

One of the Committee tried the experiment of

standing the ladies on glass, and failed to get any sounds; but the same was subsequently tried in the presence of a large number of persons, and the sounds were as loud and distinct as before, on the floor, as usual.

Such are the facts, as for as the public proceedings are concerned, (which is but a small part of these strange occurrences,) with the Committees' report greatly condensed.

Thus the matter stands at present, and whether it is only a remarkable phenomenon, which will pass away with the present generation, or with the persons who seem now to be the medium of this extra ordinary communication ; or whether it be the commencement of a new era of spiritual influx into the world, it is certainly something worthy the attention of men of candor and philosophy.

E. W. CAPRON, Auburn,
GEORGE WILLETS, Rochester.
Rochester, Nov. 22. 1849."

The 1851 book "Pittsburg and Allegheny Spirit Rappings" can be read here. The book corroborates the account above. On this page the author says he was present at the event described above, and says this: "Each of the Committee, after the report of their Chairman, were called upon to make a report individually, and what is unusual where any doubtful matter is under consideration, every individual agreed to all that is published in the above extract."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:13 AM No comments:

Labels: life after death, mediums, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, spiritualism

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Sunday, September 24, 2023

Spookiest Years, Part 1: The Year 1848

This is the first in a series of posts that will appear at intermittent intervals on this blog, interrupted by other posts on entirely different topics. Each of the posts in this series will look at some year in which there were reports of very spooky things happening. To a very large degree today's academia and today's mainstream press have enforced a certain type of historical amnesia, in which accounts of the paranormal are a kind of "forbidden history" that is "kept hidden in sealed boxes"; and this "Spookiest Years" series will try to do a tiny bit to lessen such amnesia by discussing important reports made long ago of hard-to-explain events.

An extremely important principle when dealing with claims of the extraordinary or paranormal or supernatural is: search diligently for all the earliest known eyewitness accounts, and study them very carefully. The quality of evidence for claims of the extraordinary or paranormal or supernatural often depends on how quickly preserved eyewitness accounts were written or filmed. For example:

- An account by someone who had a near-death experience written or recorded within a week or two after the experience occurred is very good quality evidence. But if the account is merely someone telling what happened to him twenty years ago, such evidence is of much lower quality. During that twenty years the person may have gradually embellished his account. Also, a firsthand account is much better evidence that someone telling you that he was told something by someone else.
- A year 2023 account of what happened in Roswell, New Mexico in July, 1947 is of much less value than newspaper accounts written in July, 1947. Any serious

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Scientist Flubs and Flops #8

SETI Scientist Misspoke Sagan-Style

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student of the famous Roswell incident should study the exact text of the earliest newspaper reports, such as the text of the original Roswell Daily Record account of the crash, and the reports a few days later in the same paper claiming that the crash was a mere balloon crash.

- Anyone attempting to seriously study the anomalous events in Fatima, Portugal in 1917 should concentrate on finding the text of the earliest known reports and eyewitness statements, rather than basing his opinions solely on things written about such events decades later.

Anyone should follow such principles when trying to sort out what happened in upstate New York in 1848, the case of the famed mysterious raps that were the beginning of decades of intense interest in spiritualism in the United States, with the interest spreading to other countries such as England and Brazil. First involving the Fox family including the famed Fox sisters, the relevant events first occurred in Hydesville, New York in March, 1848, with the phenomenon soon being reported in nearby Rochester, New York, later that year. You could form an opinion on this series of incidents by reading Volume 1 of Arthur Conan Doyle's "The History of Spiritualism," written in 1926, which can be read here. But that would not be the best approach, because who knows what embellishment of the original account may have occurred between 1848 and 1946. Better yet, you could form an our opinion on this incident by reading the 1870 book "Modern American Spiritualism: a Twenty Years' Record of the Communion Between Earth and the World of Spirits" by Emma Hardinge, which can read here. But that would still not be the best approach, because who knows what embellishment of the original account may have occurred between 1848 and 1870. The best approach is to seek out the earliest written documents on this affair.

I was able to find the earliest document written about the mysterious raps reported by the Fox family. The document is an 1848 booklet entitled "*A Report of the Mysterious Noises Heard in the House of Mr. John D. Fox in Hydesville, Arcadia, Wayne County, Authenticated by the Certificates, and Confirmed by the Statements of the Citizens of That Place and Vicinity* by E. E. Lewis (1848), which you can read here. We have eyewitness testimony cited here, and the testimony is the most reliable type of testimony: testimony recorded only a small number of days after the described incidents. Based on the dated reward offer at the end of the book offering $50 (quite a bit of money in those days) to anyone who could disprove the claims made, a reward

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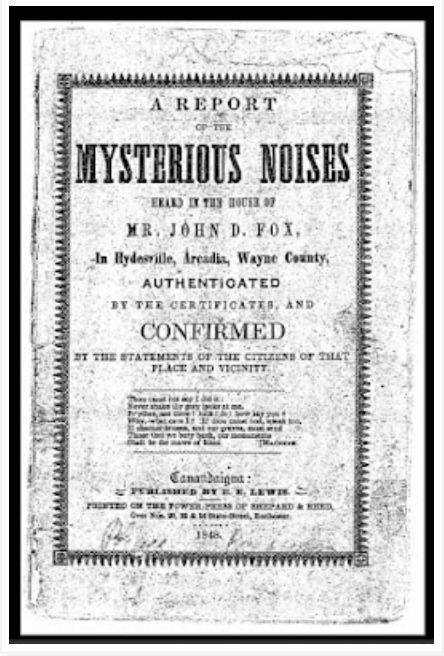
offer which has a date of April 20, 1848, we may presume the document was published about April 20th, 1848, which is only three weeks after the start of the claimed paranormal phenomenon.



A REPORT
OF THE
MYSTERIOUS NOISES
HEARD IN THE HOUSE OF
MR. JOHN D. FOX,
In Hydesville, Arcadia, Wayne County,
AUTHENTICATED
BY THE CERTIFICATES, AND
CONFIRMED
BY THE STATEMENTS OF THE CITIZENS OF THAT PLACE AND VICINITY.

Canandaigua:
PUBLISHED BY E. E. LEWIS.
PRINTED ON THE POWER-PRESS OF SHEPARD & REED,
1848.

On the first page of the book, the author (E. E. Lewis) gives us some reasons for trusting what he writes:

(1) The author has no ax to grind. His purpose is not to convince anyone of any doctrine or even convince anyone that some supernatural events were occurring. Indicating a very open mind on this topic, he states this on the first page:

"*But whether it be owing to supernatural means or not, will probably be developed in time. It maybe the result of trickery, or fear, or superstition, or all combined.*"

(2) The author has interviewed all of the witnesses soon after the events occurred. He states this on the first page:

"We have spent several days in that place [Hydesville], for the purpose of investigating this strange affair, and if possible to solve the mystery. During that time, we had an opportunity to converse with scores of the most respectable citizens of that place, who had themselves spent no little time in endeavoring to satisfy their own minds as to the cause of these noises..
They had all heard them at different times. during the past two weeks, and manifested a strong desire that the truth should be made known,—that the noises should be accounted for as the effect of some natural causes."

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

Notable Posts

- A Table Listing 50 Things Science Cannot Explain
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- Why We Do Not Understand the Origin of Any Adult Human Being
- A Very Strong Effect of Repeating Patterns in Mysterious Striped Orbs
- They Had Flourishing Minds But Broken Brains
- Paradoxes That Puncture Professorial Pretensions
- Humanity Prerequisites: A Table of 18 Anthropic Requirements
- When World-Class Scientists Saw Ghosts (Part 1)
- The Enigma of Veridical Near-Death Experiences
- When Natural Things Seem to Act in a Shockingly Unnatural Way
- Are Public Schools Teaching a Stealth Religion?
- The Building Blocks of Bad Science Literature
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 Cases
- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
- Biological Orthodoxy Flunks the Software Test
- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

This is all very good from the standpoint of the credibility of the account. The author has shown up only a few days after the spooky events started happening, and has interviewed all of the witnesses. Moreover, the witnesses aren't even people with any interest or motive in spreading false stories about the paranormal. It must be emphasized that at the time E. E. Lewis recorded the testimony of the witnesses, there was zero financial motivation for any of them to be telling false stories about the paranormal. No one at this time could ever dream what would have resulted as an aftermath from the strange reports. At the time Hydesville, New York was a "one horse" town "in the middle of nowhere," and the prospects of anyone financially profiting from the tales told would have seemed like zero at the time. In April 1848 no one had any idea of the astonishing phenomenal events that would follow the Hydesville rap reports, and no one had any idea that the Hydesville events would seem like the seed of a major new development in American spirituality. No one in 1848 had any idea that there would several years later be mediums who charged fees for claimed contacts with the dead, or people who made money from books on the topic of spiritualism, which no one had heard about in 1848.

The first eyewitness account given by E. E. Lewis in his 1848 booklet appears on page 6. We have an account dated April 11, 1848 given by Margaret Fox, the wife of John D. Fox and the mother of the famed Fox sisters. Here are some quotes from the account (I will make no attempt to correct any of the sentences that seem like writing style shortfalls):

"*We moved into this house on the 11th December, 1847, and have resided here ever since. We formerly resided in the city of Rochester. We first heard this noise about a fortnight ago. It sounded like some one knocking in the east bed-room, on the floor; sometimes it sounded as if the chair moved on the floor ; we could hardly tell where it was. This was in the evening, just after we had gone to bed. The whole family slept in that room together, and all heard the noise. There was four of our family, and sometimes five. The first night that we heard the rapping, we all got up and lit a candle; and searched all over the house. The noise continued while we were hunting, and was heard near the same, place all the time. It was not very loud yet it produced a jar of the bedsteads and chairs, that could be felt by placing our hands on the chair. or while we were in bed. It was a feeling of a tremulous motion, more than a sullen jar. lt seemed as if we could feel it jar while we were standing on the floor. It continued this night until we went to sleep. I did not go to sleep until nearly 12 o'clock. . The noise continued to be heard every night.*

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- 25 Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death
- Why the Origin of Language Is Inexplicable Under Orthodox Assumptions
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- The Top 6 Problems With Using a Multiverse to Explain Cosmic Fitness
- "Vacuum Catastrophe" Should Be Called the Vacuum Miracle
- Why the Origin of Humans Is an Unsolved Mystery
- The Best Basis for Believing in an Afterlife Is Something Other Than Paranormal Phenomena
- Still More Dreams or Visions That Seemed to Foretell a Death
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- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

On Friday night, the 31st of March, it was heard as usual, and, we then for the first time called in the neighbors. Up to this time we had never heard it in the day time or at least did not notice it at all."

Mrs. Fox said that one of the two Fox daughters, aged 12 and 15, tried to imitate the rapping sound by cracking her fingers; and that a rapping noise was soon heard, as if response to such a thing. We then read Mrs. Fox say this:

"The other girl, who is in her 15th year, then spoke as in sport and: said: 'Now, do this just as I do. Count one, two, three, four,' &c., strikiing one band in the other at the same time. The blows which she made were repeated as before. It appeared to answer her by repeating every blow that she made. She only did so once. She then began to be startled ; and then I spoke and said to the noise, 'Count ten,' and it made ten strokes or noises. Then I asked the ages of my different children successively, and it gave a number of raps, corresponding to the ages of my children.

I then asked if it was a human being that was making the noise ? and if it was, to manifest it by the same noise. There was no noise, I then asked if it was a spirit / and if it was, to manifest it by two sounds. I heard two sounds as soon as the words were spoken. I then asked, if it was an injured spirit ? to give me the sound, and [heard the rapping distinctly.. I then asked if it was injured in this house ? and it manifested it by the noise. If the person was living that injured it ? and got the same answer. I then ascertained, by the same method that its remains were buried under the dwelling, and how old it was.
When I asked how many years old it was? it rapped 31 times ; that it was a male; that it had left a family of five children-; that it had two sons and three daughters, all living. I asked if it left a wife? and it rapped. fits wife was then living ?
no rapping; if she was dead? and the rapping was distinctly heard how long she had been dead? and it rapped twice."

Mrs. Fox then tells how she called in a Mrs. Redfield to observe the phenomenon, with similar results occurring when Mrs. Redfield was there. Mrs. Redfield then called in "Mr. Duesler and wife, and several others." They were followed by a Mr. and Mrs. Hyde, and a Mr. and Mrs. Jewell. Mrs. Fox reports that in questioning by asking for raps, Mr. Duesler seemed to get an account that the rap originator was murdered five years ago in the house, by a slitting of the throat. We read Mrs. Fox say that the house soon had many visitors:

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

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" On the next day the house was filled to overflowing all day. This was on Saturday. There was no sound heard through the day: but in the evening the noise commenced again. Some said that there were three hundred people present at this time. They appointed a committee, and many questions were asked. I did not know much what was done that night, only by hearsay, as I went to Mr. Duesler's to stay all night. On Sunday morning, the 2nd day of April, the noise commenced again, and was heard throughout the day by all who came here."

Mrs. Margaret Fox concludes her account with this statement:

"I am not a believer in haunted houses or supernatural appearances. l am very sorry that there has been so much excitement about it. It has been a great deal of trouble to us. It was our misfortune to live here at this time ; but I am willing and anxious that the truth should be known, and that a true statement should be made. I cannot account for these noises; all that I know is, that they have been heard repeatedly, as I have stated. I have heard this: rapping again this (Tuesday) morning, April 4. My children also heard it.

I certify that the above statement has been read to me; and that the same is true ; and that I should be willing to take my oath that it was so, if necessary. (Signed,)

April 11th, 1848 MARGARET FOX."

We have here several indications of a high reliability: (1) the mention of very numerous witnesses, many named, who reported the same phenomenon; (2) the indication that the original statement dates from April 11, 1848, only a few days after the reported events; (3) the statement by the author that she is "not a believer in haunted houses or supernatural appearances," and is thereby reporting evidence contradicting her own belief tendencies; (4) a lack of any motive for lying about such a matter, with the whole matter seeming to be just a nuisance. I may note that the author of this statement is not to be confused with her daughter of the same name.

The next statement we have in the document is from John D. Fox, Margaret's husband. He states the following:

"I *have heard the above statement of my wife, MARGARET Fox, and hereby certify that the same is true, in all its particulars. I heard the same rapping which she has spoken of, in answer to the questions, as stated by her. There have been a great many*

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Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

questions besides those asked, and answered in the same way. Some have been asked over a great many times, and they have always received the saine answer; there never has been any contradiction whatever.

I do not know of any way to account for these noises, as being caused by any natural means. We have searched in every nook and corner in and about the house, at different times, to ascertain if possible whether any thing or any body was secreted here, that could make the noise, and have never been. able to find any thing which explained the mystery. It has caused a great deal of trouble and anxiety... Hundreds have visited the house, so that it is impossible for us to attend to our daily occupations ; and I hope that whether caused by natural, or supernatural means, will be ascertained soon. The digging in the cellar will be resumed as soon as the water settles ; and then it can be ascertained whether there are any indications of a body ever having been buried there; and if there are, I shall have no doubt but what this is a supernatural appearance. I am willing to make the statements which I have made about this matter, under oath, if you wish to have me do so. The rapping has been heard again to-day in answer to the questions.

April 11th, 1848. (Signed); JOHN D. FOX."

The document then gives a statement of a William Duesler of Acadia, who says that he was first very skeptical but also heard the strange rapping noises. The most relevant part of Duesler's account from an evidence standpoint is the part below in which he asks questions at the Fox house:

"I then asked it to rap my age ? the number of years of my age. It rapped 30 times. This is my age, and I do not think that any one about here knows my age, but myself and my own family. I then told it to rap my wife's age ? and it rapped 30 times, which is her exact age : several of us counted it at the time.— I then asked it to rap A. W. Hyde's age? and it rapped 32, which he says is his age : he was there at the time, and counted, it with the rest of us :—then Mrs. A. W. Hyde's age ? and it rapped 31, which she said was her age : she was also there at the time. I then continued to ask it to rap the ages of different persons, (naming them,) in the room ? and it did so correctly, as they all said.

I then asked the number of children in the different families in the neighborhood ? and it told them correctly in the usual way, by rapping. Also, the number of deaths that had taken place in these families? and it told correctly."

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
- anthropic principle (22)
- antimatter (3)
- apocalypse (5)
- apparition (76)
- apparition acting like a death notification (22)
- apparition of the living (6)
- apparition seen by multiple witnesses (16)
- apports (5)
- aquatic mega-patternization (1)
- archaeology (1)
- argument against brain storage of all memories (20)
- argument for soul (17)
- argument from evil (3)
- Artemis (1)
- artificial intelligence (7)
- artificial planets (1)
- artificial worlds (1)
- asteroid mining (1)
- asteroids (1)
- astral projection (1)
- astrobiology (2)
- astroengineering (3)
- astronomy (14)
- atheism (3)
- augmented reality (2)
- aura (1)
- austerity (1)
- Australian mystery lights (1)
- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

The answers above are relevant to all claims that the raps were produced by one of the Fox daughters rapping her knuckles or cracking her joints; for here we have the mysterious rapping effect producing many correct answers that should have been unknown to such daughters. Such claims about knuckle rapping or joint cracking were never credible. The original report by Mrs. Fox mentioned a strong tremulous effect, which innumerable subsequent witnesses of such an effect in the next years would repeat, often reporting thunderous shakings. Such effects cannot be explained by knuckle rapping or joint cracking.

Duesler ends with this statement:

"I can in no way account for this singular noise, which 1 and others have heard. It is a mystery to me, which I am wholly unable to solve. I am willing to testify under oath that I did not make the noises or rapping which I and others heard; that I do not know of any person who did or could have made them; that I have spent considerable time since then, in order to satisfy myself as to the cause of it; but cannot account for it on any other ground than it is supernatural... I never believed in haunted houses, or heard or saw any thing but what I could account for before ; but this I cannot account for as yet.

April 12, 1848. (Signed,) WM. DUESLER."

The document then contains numerous accounts by other witnesses, all of them reporting the hearing of mysterious raps. None of the witnesses have any theory to advance of a natural cause of the sounds, and several of them state they can think of no natural explanation. Repeatedly the witnesses state that the answers were consistent, and that when the same question was asked, the same answer was given. The material in the last part of the document is not very relevant. It includes:

(1) One of more statements of a previous occupant of the house (before the Foxes) saying they witnessed something rather spooky, but nothing as dramatic as what the document reports. (2) A not-very-relevant statement by quite a few people saying they can vouch for the character of one John C. Bell, who some thought might have had something with a murder occurring in the Fox house before they occupied it.

All in all, the 1848 booklet entitled "*A Report of the Mysterious Noises Heard in the House of Mr. John D. Fox in Hydesville, Arcadia, Wayne County, Authenticated by the Certificates, and Confirmed by the Statements of the Citizens of That Place and*

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

Vicinity by E. E. Lewis (1848), which you can read here, makes a remarkably powerful testimony in favor of a paranormal event. The testimony of the witnesses is in agreement on the reality of the mysterious raps, and the lack of any natural explanation for them. The testimony is written testimony from the eyewitnesses, written down and sworn to within days (or at most two weeks) after the reported events. I may contrast this account with the Ariel school UFO report in Zimbawe. The event involving child witnesses took place on September 16, 1994, and Harvard professor John Mack showed up to interview witnesses on December 2, 1994. Mack's evidence is pretty good, involving a gap of only 6 weeks. But the evidence published by E. E. Lewis is even better, as he has taken sworn statements within two weeks of the reported incidents; and all of the witnesses quoted by Lewis are adults.

It was interesting for me to compare the account of Mrs. Margaret Fox in the 1848 document above, and an almost identical account cited in Arthur Conan Doyle's 1920 "History of Spiritualism." The words quoted are almost identical, but in the beginning Doyle's version is slightly different in a few sentences. The differences are all trivial. In a case of a textual diversion like this, we should regard the earlier document as being the more accurate account. Doyle states this: "The author has in vain attempted to get an original copy of the pamphlet, 'A Report of the Mysterious Noises heard in the House of Mr. John D. Fox,' published at Canandaigua, New York, but he has been presented with a facsimile of the original." It is such a "facsimile" that he is quoting, but it has a few minor divergences from the original. On www.archive.org we have the original pamphlet that Doyle sought in vain to get, the one I have been quoting from in this post, which you can read here; and that should be quoted as the original account, not Doyle's "facsimile." Similarly, the 1870 book "Modern American Spiritualism: a Twenty Years' Record of the Communion Between Earth and the World of Spirits" by Emma Hardinge, which can read here, tells the story of March 31, 1848 in Hydesville with some slight differences from the 1848 booklet by E. E. Lewis I have quoted above. It is that booklet which we should regard as the better source, since it was written very soon after that day in 1848, rather than 22 years later. The 1855 book here quotes very much of the account quoted above from the 1848 booklet by E. E. Lewis.

In judging the credibility of the account quoted here, we should ask ourselves: did anyone else in some other place or time report a similar phenomenon? In this case we must answer "yes" in a very loud voice. There is modest evidence that such mysterious raps occurred before the phenomenon at Hydesville.

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

For example, a nineteenth century author states being told this by a member of the Shakers religious community:

"*It seemed that manifestations of spiritual presence, through rappings, movings of furniture, visions, trance, clairaudience, and clairvoyance, had been common amongst the Shakers since the time of their foundation, some seventy years ago ; but the particular visitation to which the visitors desired to call attention, took place about 1830, when a multitude of spiritual beings, with the most solemn and forcible tokens of their presence, in a variety of phenomenal ways indicated the approach of a great spiritual crisis, in which they designed for a season to withdraw the special gifts enjoyed by the Shakers, and pour them out in mighty floods upon the ' world's people,' who, for the realization of certain divine purposes, faintly shadowed forth, were to be visited by unlooked-for and stupendous tokens of spiritual presence.*"

An 1824 book ("Memoirs of the Wesley Family") concerns the family of John Wesley, the distinguished clergyman who was founder of the Christian denomination known as Methodism. In a document entitled "An Account of Noises and Disturbances in my House at Epworth, Lincolnshire, in December and January, 1716" by Samuel Wesley, we hear of a family observing all kinds of mysterious noises and raps. Below is an excerpt:

"The next night but one we were awaked at about one by the noises, which were so violent, it was in vain to think of sleep while they continued. I rose, and my wife would rise with me. We went into every chamber, and down stairs; and generally as we went into one room, we heard it in that behind us, though all the family had been in bed several hours. When we were going down stairs, and at the bottom of them, we heard, as Emily had done before, a clashing among the bottles, as if they had been broke all to pieces, and another sound distinct from it, as if a peck of money had been thrown down before us.... It began with knocking in the kitchen underneath, then seemed to be at the bed's feet, then under the bed, at last at the head of it. I went down stairs, and knocked with my stick against the joists of the kitchen. It answered me as often and as loud as I knocked....When we were at prayers, and came to the prayers for King George and the Prince, it would make a great noise over our heads constantly, whence some of the family called it a Jacobite. I have been thrice pushed by an invisible power, once against the corner of my desk in the study, a second time against the door of the matted chamber, a third time against the right side of the frame of my study door, as I was going in."

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

Later in the same 1824 book we have a long account by the distinguished John Wesley of mysterious raps heard by quite a few family members, sometimes so loud "it seemed the house shook from top to bottom." Below is one part:

"We then heard a knocking over our heads; and Mr. Wesley catching up a candle, said, ' Come, Sir, now you shall hear for yourself.' We went up stairs ; he with much hope, and I (to say the truth) with much fear. When we came into the nursery, it was knocking in the next room ; when we were there, it was knocking in the nursery. And there it continued to knock, though we came in, particularly at the head of the bed (which was of wood) in which Miss Hetty and two of her younger sisters lay. Mr. Wesley, observing that they were much affected though asleep, sweating, and trembling exceedingly, was very angry ; and pulling out a pistol, was going to fire at the place from whence the sound came."

The main reason we must answer "yes" to the question of whether anyone else in some other place or time reported a similar phenomenon is that following the incidents in the spring of 1848 in Hydesville, New York there occurred a huge abundance of similar reports of mysterious raps, from a very large variety of different places in the United States and different countries, some of which were recorded by distinguished scientists, along with abundant reports of many other types of inexplicable paranormal phenomena such as levitations and tables moving around inexplicably when no one touched them. The January 1, 1853 edition of a periodical publication (*The Spiritual Telegraph*) describes the spread of the manifestations like this:

"The 'Manifestations' were not long confined to the Fox family. They were soon beard of in different towns of Western New York; then in Western Ohio; then in Providence, R. I. , and various parts of Now England; and in Philadelphia, Cincinnati, St. Louis...and recent letters speak of them as quite extensively witnessed in California ; while late advices chronicle their outbreak in Hull, England."

Most of the times such things happened when the Fox sisters were not present, and many of the times such raps seemed to answer questions as if some mysterious agency possessed knowledge the Fox sisters could not have had. A later 1853 edition of the same periodical would report this about one of the spooky phenomena that seemed like an aftermath of the Hydesville events: "There is hardly a house in Paris that the phenomenon has not invaded." To read about that, you can

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

read some additional installments of this "Spookiest Years" series, which will be published at various irregular intervals in the next few months. I may note that there is no question that the E. E. Lewis 1848 booklet quoted above, which you can read here, is an authentic 1848 publication and the earliest account of the Hydesville events. In researching this topic I have by now read quite a few other documents published in the next few years which quote the Lewis booklet as I have quoted it, citing is as the earliest known account.

Beyond Hydesville lay a spooky path

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:29 AM No comments:

Labels: life after death, mysterious raps, paranormal phenomena, spiritualism

Sunday, September 17, 2023

Near-Death Experience Testimonies From the AWARE II Study

Near-death experiences are not merely topics in books, but also the object of rigorous scientific research. A 2004 study on near-death experiences was published in the British medical journal *The Lancet* in 2001. The study interviewed 344 patients who had a close encounter with death, generally through cardiac arrest. 62 of those reported some kind of near-death experience. 15 reported an out-of-body experience, 19 reported moving through a tunnel, 18 reported observation of a celestial landscape, 20 reported meeting with deceased persons, and 35 reported positive emotions.

In 2014 there was published the long-anticipated results of the AWARE study led by Dr. Sam Parnia. Over 2000 cardiac arrest cases were studied, and there were only 330 who survived to leave the hospital. Of those 330, only 101 met eligibility requirements, agreed to be interviewed, and also agreed to “stage 2” interviews. So the study ended up with a group of only

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

101 persons who had experienced a close encounter with death, generally because of a cardiac arrest.

Of this pool of 101 persons, 22% answered "Yes" to the question, "Did you have a feeling of peace or pleasantness?" 13% answered "Yes" to the question, "Did you feel separated from your body?" 13% answered "Yes" to the question, "Were your senses more vivid than usual?" 8% answered "Yes" to the question, "Did you seem to encounter a mystical being or presence, or hear an unidentifiable voice?" 7% answered "Yes" to the question, "Did you seem to enter some other, unearthly world?" Only 3% answered "Yes" to the question, "Did you see deceased or religious spirits?"

These results were corroboration of published accounts of what typically happens in a near-death experience, although the numbers are smaller than those reported in the Lancet study. The AWARE study quoted one respondent who gives an account very much like what has been published in previous books on near-death experiences:

"I have come back from the other side of life. . .God sent (me) back, it was not (my) time—(I) had many things to do. . .(I traveled) through a tunnel toward a very strong light, which didn't dazzle or hurt (my) eyes. . .there were other people in the tunnel whom (I) did not recognize. When (I) emerged (I) described a very beautiful crystal city. . . there was a river that ran through the middle of the city (with) the most crystal clear waters. There were many people, without faces, who were washing in the waters. . .the people were very beautiful. . . there was the most beautiful singing. . .(and I was) moved to tears. (My) next recollection was looking up at a doctor doing chest compressions".

The 2014 AWARE study seemed to "hit the jackpot" in regard to one case of a 57-year-old patient who said that he floated out of his body while being revived from his cardiac arrest. The man said that a woman appeared in a high corner of the room, beckoning him to come up to her. He said that despite thinking that was impossible, he found himself up in the high corner of the room, looking down on the medical team trying to revive him. The man described specific details of the revival efforts, including the presence of a bald fat man with a blue hat, a nurse saying, "Dial 444 cardiac arrest," his blood pressure being taken, a nurse pumping on his chest, a doctor sticking something down his throat, and blood gases and blood sugar levels being taken.

Here is what the scientific paper said in regard to the accuracy of these recollections:

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

"He accurately described people, sounds, and activities from his resuscitation...His medical records corroborated his accounts and specifically supported his descriptions and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). Based on current AED algorithms, this likely corresponded with up to 3 minutes of conscious awareness during CA [cardiac arrest] and CPR."

So here is a man who had a heart attack, and should have been unconscious during the medical efforts to revive him. Instead he accurately describes the details of what happened. Moreover, he claims that he observed these details while in a position above his body, in the high corner of the medical room. What we have here is what seems like a good-as-gold vintage "out of the body experience," one with details that have been verified. This is an example of what is called a veridical near-death experience – one with observations that were subsequently verified. Quite a few other examples of this are discussed here.

This year we had the publication of an AWARE II study that is kind of a sequel to the 2014 AWARE study, but one with a much lower budget, studying only about one fifth as many people as the original AWARE study. In the AWARE II study 567 people suffering in-hospital cardiac arrest (IHCA) were studied. We read, "Of 567 IHCA, 53(9.3%) survived, 28 of these (52.8%) completed interviews, and 11(39.3%) reported CA [cardiac arrest] memories/perceptions suggestive of consciousness." The authors claim that 3 of these 11 reporting memories of experiences during cardiac arrest reported "dream-like" experiences, while twice as many (6) reported what the authors call "transcendent recalled experience of death."

A "substudy" part of the study made some attempt to get brain wave readings from people who doctors were trying to resuscitate from cardiac arrest. Some graph shows that there were some brain wave readings occurring twenty or thirty or forty minutes after resuscitation efforts began. But that doesn't tell us anything important. Of course, if you revive someone's heart through resuscitation efforts, that will start to get his brain waves back to normal.

The design of the study was rather strange, and there were two rather odd aspects:

(1) There was a bizarre element in which a tablet computer was clamped above the head of the people who doctors were trying to resuscitate, and the tablet displayed visual and auditory cues such as an auditory mention of three random fruits. The study reports that one of the people suffering cardiac arrest correctly identified the random auditory mention of three fruits, when

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

asked to name three fruits. But with 28 surviving subject that could have happened with about a 2% likelihood, and doesn't really offer any clues about near-death experiences.

(2) There is some very strange affair in which we have graphs mixing data from the studied hospital subjects and a larger data set of 126 "community CA survivors" obtained from mail-in reports or from some near-death experience website (www.nderf.com). Reports obtained from such a way do not have the same evidence quality as interviews you have made from people you know suffered cardiac arrest, shortly after they suffered such cardiac arrest. So the idea of having a graph made from some mixture from between the two data sets seems odd.

Because they are lower-quality evidence not as good as the accounts from verified cardiac arrests taken soon after their cardiac arrest, I will ignore the quotes taken from 126 self-reports from "community CA survivors," merely noting that they match some of the details mentioned in the paragraphs quoted below. The quotes from these "community CA survivors" are found in the Supplemental Information part of the paper. Below are some interesting quotes in the main text of the study, apparently all accounts taken from verified cardiac arrest survivors soon after their cardiac arrest:

An Out-of-Body Experience

The main body of the Aware II paper has this quote of someone describing an out-of-body experience.

"I was no longer in my body. I floated without weight or physicality. I was above my body and directly below the ceiling of the intensive therapy room. I observed the scene that was taking place below me ... I, who no longer was the body that had belonged to me just a moment prior, found myself in a position which was ... more elevated. It was a place that had nothing to do with any kind of ... material experience."

Going Through the Tunnel

The main body of the Aware II paper has this quote of someone describing the extremely common account of going through a tunnel during a near-death experience.

"I remember entering a ... tunnel. The feelings I experienced ... were much more intense than [usual]. The first feeling was a feeling of intense peace. It was so calm and serene with an incredible amount of tranquility. All of my ... worries, thoughts,

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

fears, and opinions were gone. The intensity of the tranquility was so incredible and overwhelming that there was no fear in what I was experiencing. I had no fear about where I was going and what to expect when I arrived there. Then I felt warmth ... Then there was the desire to be home."

A Being of Light and a Life Review

The main body of the Aware II paper has this quote of someone giving the extremely common account of encountering a being of light during a near-death experience.

"I do remember a being of light ... standing near me. It was looming over me like a great tower of strength, yet radiating only warmth and love ... I caught glimpses of my life and felt pride, love, joy, and sadness, all pouring into me. Each images was of me, but from the standpoint of a being standing with me or looking on... I was shown the consequences of my life, thousands of people that I'd interacted with and felt what they felt about me, saw their life and how I had impacted them. Next I saw the consequences of my life and the influence of my actions."

An Account of a Mystical Place

The main body of the Aware II paper has this quote of someone giving the extremely common account of encountering a mystical or heavenly-seeming place during a near-death experience:

"I went directly to a place of light. It was calm and immediate ... The place where I was I perceived to be analogous in a way to the exterior of an entry way...There was one major being of love and many other beings of love ... There was nothing but love, goodness, truth, and all things to do with love. There was no

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

room for fear or evil or anything but this love. It was more wonderful than any of my best hopes or experiences [in this place]. It was beyond perfect and loving, as we in our human state know it. There are no words to describe it. I was so happy to be there."

Faced With a Choice About Returning to the Flesh

The main body of the Aware II paper has this quote of someone giving the extremely common account of being faced with a choice about whether to return to earthly life during a near-death experience:

"I was asked if I wanted to come home (meaning there) or wanted to come back here. I told them that my two sons needed me and I had to go back. I was suddenly in my body again feeling my achy joints flaring in pain. I really don't remember what was going on around me at that point, just that I hurt."

We read this about the attempts to get people to remember auditory and visual stimuli during cardiac arrest episodes:

"Nonetheless, among 28 survivors, nobody described explicit recall of seeing the independent image on the tablet, nor hearing the auditory stimuli. Regarding implicit learning, nobody identified the displayed visual image (from 10 candidate-images) and 1/28(3.5%) chose the correct three fruits (apple, pear, banana)."

The supplemental information tells us that patients who did not recall hearing any fruits were then then told that the names of three fruits were played, and asked to guess them. One of the 28 gave a correct answer. Given about 1000 possible combinations of three fruits, such a success would have had about a 3% probability. The result is not very impressive, since it does not prove that perception occurred when the heart was stopped.

What we have here is nothing terribly new, compared to previous results regarding near-death experiences. It's simply more of what already exists massively: evidence of the reality of such experiences and more evidence that people report very similar observations during such reports. Considering the 1975 book *Life After Life* by Raymond Moody, it is amazing how well the generalizations made in that book keep standing up to continued scrutiny and continued tests. In that book Moody reported an archetype or typical near-death experience that had elements such as a perception of floating out of the body, feelings of peace and joy, a life-review that occurs very quickly

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

or in some altered type of time, a passage through a tunnel, an encounter with a being of light, seeing deceased relatives (often in some mystical or unearthly realm), and being faced with a choice about whether or not to return to earthly life. The same elements keep appearing in new accounts of near-death experiences, accounts such as the new accounts quoted above.

Moreover, a study of pre-1975 literature shows many examples with features like the ones mentioned above, as I report here. The pages here and here describe out-of-body experiences of the nineteenth century. The page here lists a nineteenth century near-death experience involving the "life review" so often reported in near-death experiences. The study here reports that 40-percent of a sample of survivors of the 1976 Tangshan earthquake in China (who very probably knew nothing of Moody's book) reported near-death experiences, and that "the great majority of these NDEs were of the cognitive and transcendental types," with the reports only "somewhat different" from those reported in the West. A study of near-death experiences in Iran reported remarkable similarities to Western accounts.

The CNN article on the AWARE II study has the misleading headline "Near-Death Experiences Tied to Brain Activity After Death, Study Says." But the text of the article quotes the study's main author and states, "It's correct that the study was not able to match electrical activity with a near death experience in the same patient, Parnia says." Such a thing goes on all the time nowadays: mainstream press headlines that do not match the facts reported in the story.

In a 2018 paper some authors seem to sound like they are worried about all the people who are reporting striking experiences after being revived from cardiac arrest. The authors suggest that it's time to develop a protocol for sedating such people. It sounds like a "suppress the evidence for the paranormal" program.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:12 AM No comments:

Labels: life after death, near-death experience, paranormal phenomena

Thursday, August 24, 2023

Some Recommended Online Reading

The site www.archive.org is an invaluable resource for scholars of psychic phenomena and the paranormal. Using the site, you can find very many books written by witnesses of the paranormal and scholars of the paranormal. The full text of very many of these books can be read by a user who does not

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

even bother to register at the site. Examples of such books are below:

- The astronomer Camille Flammarion's monumental three-volume work *Death and Its Mystery* (which you can read here, here and here);
- Flammarion's also monumental opus The Unknown;
- Catherine Crowe's long book *The Night Side of Nature*;
- The often cited work two-volume *Phantasms of the Living* by Gurney, Podmore and Myers, which you can read here and here;
- The long and very fascinating work *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* by former US congressman Robert Dale Owen;
- The Debatable Land Between This World and the Next by the same author, a worthy successor volume of equal length;
- The Voices by Vice-Admiral William Usborne Moore, a fascinating account of mysterious auditory phenomena during seances;
- On the Edge of the Etheric by James Arthur Findlay, a book on the same topic;
- The Proof Palpable of Immortality by Epes Sargeant;
- Planchette, or the Despair of Science, a longer work on paranormal phenomena by the same author;
- Natural and Mesmeric Clairvoyance by James Esdaille MD, written by a doctor who was very successful in getting very large numbers of patients to be pain-free during surgery without anesthesia (using only hypnosis);
- Clairvoyance and Thoughtography by Tomokici Fukurai, a Japanese professor, a book which presents in its Chapter 1 some superb evidence for clairvoyance;
- The very long two-volume work *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* by Frederic Myers, which you can read here and here;
- *From the Unconscious to the Conscious* by Gustave Geley;
- The Widow's Mite and Other Psychic Phenomena by Isaac Funk, the same Funk of the famous Funk and Wagnall's dictionary;
- The Watseka Wonder by E.W. Stevens, a contemporary account of one of the most notable

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

cases in the history of the paranormal, discussed here;

- *Noted Witnesses for Psychic Occurrences* by W. F. Prince, a book documenting how countless illustrious names have reported paranormal experiences;
- Researches into the Phenomena of Modern Spiritualism by Sir William Crookes, one of the most accomplished physicists of the nineteenth century (see here and here and here for related writing by the same author);
- The Survival of Man by physicist Sir Oliver Lodge;
- Out-of-the-Body Experiences by Robert Crookall;
- *More Astral Projections* by the same author, containing some fascinating cases I discuss here;
- What Happens When You Die by the same author;
- Dead and Gone by James S. Pollack, a very readable description of paranormal phenomena;
- Ghosts and Poltergeists by Herbert Thurston and J.H. Crehan, one of the most in-depth examinations of poltergeist cases;
- Phenomena of Materialization by Baron Albert von Schrenck-Notzing, discussing very interesting results described here;
- *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism* by N. B. Wolfe MD, a book documenting materialization phenomena during seances of the medium Mrs. Mary J. Hollis;
- *Letters to a Candid Inquirer*, on Animal Magnetism, by William Gregory M.D. professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh University, a book abundantly documenting the reality of clairvoyance, as discussed here;
- *Animal Magnetism, or Mesmerism and Its Phenomena,* another book by Gregory documenting the reality of clairvoyance and other paranormal phenomena;
- "Animal Magnetism and Magnetic Lucid Somnambulism" by Edwin Lee, MD, a book presenting very much evidence for the reality of clairvoyance in subjects who were hypnotized or in a trance;
- "A Critical History of Animal Magnetism" by the scientist Joseph-Philippe-François Deleuze, a book (along with his book here) that documents the reality of clairvoyance during hypnotism (referred to in the book by the old term animal magnetism);

- *New Frontiers of the Mind* by J. B. Rhine, the foremost twentieth century researcher on ESP;
- *After Death -- What?* by Cesare Lombroso;
- *Thirty Years of Psychical Research* by Charles Richet, a Nobel Prize winner in Physiology or Medicine;
- The Seeress of Provost by physician Justinus Kerner, an astonishing case history described here;
- There Is No Death by Florence Marryat;
- Mysterious Psychic Forces, another great work on the paranormal featuring abundant first-hand testimony by the astronomer Camille Flammarion;
- Patience Worth: A Psychic Mystery by Casper S. Yost, a book documenting one of the most interesting cases of the twentieth century;
- The Proofs of Life After Death, a balanced book presenting the opinions of many scientists, heavy thinkers and investigators regarding whether there is good evidence for life after death;
- Seen and Unseen by Emily Katherine Bates, a remarkable account of a woman's observations of paranormal phenomena around the world;
- Metaphysical Phenomena: Methods and Observations by J. Maxwell MD, which contains quite a few interesting accounts of observing paranormal phenomena, as I discuss here;
- Transcendental Physics, a book by an astronomy professor (Johann Carl Friedrich Zollner) who did careful experiments documenting many paranormal effects;
- An Introduction to the Study of Animal Magnetism by the Baron Dupotet de Sennevoy, a book that abundantly testifies to the reality of clairvoyance during hypnotic trances;
- The "Report on Spiritualism" by the Dialectical Society of London, a document of more than 400 pages containing some of the most shocking and interesting testimony ever given (the contents of which are discussed here);
- Incidents in My Life by D. D. Home, one of the most famous mediums;
- "Signs before death, and authenticated apparitions: in one hundred narratives," an 1825 book by Horace Welby that is one of many helping to show that scholarly research into psychical phenomena began much earlier than 1882;
- *The Case for Astral Projection* by Slyvan Muldoon;

- Eusapia Palladino and Her Phenomena by Hereward Carrington;
- Supernormal Faculties in Man by Eugene Osty, one of the most carefully documented accounts of clairvoyance, including the very interesting case discussed here;
- *The Celestial Telegraph* by Louis Alphonse Cahagnet, a book notable for its report of extreme clairvoyant or mediumistic skill in Adele Magnot, as I describe in my post here;
- *Man and His Relations* by Samuel Byron Brittan, a very long and little-known classic of parapsychology with contents described here;
- Glimpses of the Unseen by B. F. Austin, a 500+ page book documenting a great variety of paranormal experiences;
- The 633-page book "Psychical and Supernormal Phenomena, Their Observation and Experimentation" by Dr. Paul Joire, which you can read here (it includes the extremely interesting case I discuss here);
- Studies in the Out-lying Fields of Psychic Science by Hudson Tuttle;
- Why Mind and Memory Cannot Be Brain Effects by myself;
- *Mollie Fancher, the Brooklyn Enigma*, a long case history of one of history's most astonishing clairvoyants;
- *China's Super Psychics* by Paul Dong and Thomas E. Raffill;
- Man's Survival After Death by Charles L.Tweedale, a long book that includes many cases from the annals of the Society for Psychical Research, as well as many fascinating first-hand cases of paranormal observation by Tweedale and his family;
- 800 Mysterious Striped Orbs: A Paranormal Phenomenon by myself;
- *Psychic Science: An Introduction and Contribution to the Experimental Study of Psychical Phenomena* by Emile Boirac, which you can read here;
- "*The Veil Lifted: Modern Developments of Spirit Photography. With Twelve Illustrations,*" a book centered upon a scientific paper by mainstream photography expert J. Traill Taylor, long-time editor of the British Journal of Photography, a paper testing spirit photography, and finding astonishing success;

- *Photographing the Invisible* by James Coates, PhD, a book that takes a very serious look at the topic of spirit photography, with some astonishing photographic examples;
- *A Report of the Mysterious Noises Heard in the House of Mr. John D. Fox in Hydesville, Arcadia, Wayne County, Authenticated by the Certificates, and Confirmed by the Statements of the Citizens of That Place and Vicinity* by E. E. Lewis (1848), which you can read here, and *Explanation and History of the Mysterious Communion With Spirits Comprehending the Rise and Progress of the Mysterious Noises in Western New York, Generally Received as Spiritual Communications* by Eliab W. Capron and Henry D. Barron (1850), which you can read here. These two are the oldest documents on the topic of spiritualism and the famous Hydesville/Rochester paranormal manifestations of 1848, and the first consists of witness statements taken within about two weeks after the events, and published in the same year. Whenever studying this topic, you should be trying to get documents written as close to the reported events as possible; and these are such documents.

Cover of a book mentioned above

If you take the time to register at www.archive.org, which does not take long, the door will be opened to a huge number of more modern books, which you can "borrow" on an hourly basis simply by pressing a Borrow button after logging in. By clicking on the Borrow button after registering, you will be able to read important works on the paranormal such as these:

- *Life After Life* by Raymond Moody;
- Hidden Channels of the Mind by Louisa Rhine, who was one of the leading collectors of accounts of spontaneous telepathy and spontaneous precognition;
- *Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain* by Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder;
- *The Gift: ESP, the Extraordinary Experiences of Ordinary People* by Sally Rhine Feather and Michael Schmicker;
- Extra-sensory perception after sixty years; a critical appraisal of the research in extra-sensory perception, a long book co-edited by Joseph Rhine that gives details on some of the best experimental evidence for ESP;
- What Happens When You Die by Robert Crookall PhD, which contains many interesting accounts of out-of-body experiences;
- Out-of-Body Experiences: A Handbook by Janet Lee Mitchell;
- *Forty Years of Psychic Research* by Hamlin Garland, which you can read here;
- Extraordinary Experiences: Personal Accounts of the Paranormal in Canada by John Robert Colombo;
- At the Hour of Death by Karlis Osis and Erlendur Haraldsson, a book on deathbed visions and apparitions;
- *The Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology* edited by Leslie A. Shepard, in two volumes (which can be read here and here);
- Apparitions and Survival of Death by Raymond Bayless.
- Phantom Encounters by the editors of Time-Life books. While it discusses quite a few dubious cases as part of its highly entertaining and visually appealing presentation, this book also includes a discussion of many important and evidential apparition cases.

An aspect of www.archive.org that I particularly like is that there are individual URLs for each page. So if a scholar is citing page 347 of some book, he can include a link that takes the reader exactly to that specific page.

Other sources of information about psychical phenomena are listed below:

- The Psi Encyclopedia of the Society for Psychical Research (available here).

- The page here of the Parapsychology Foundation has links to very many papers about psychical phenomena, which can all be conveniently read online.
- The much older 1932 *Encyclopedia of Psychic Science* by Nandor Fodor available here.
- The book-length document on ESP evidence here, "Extrasensory Perception: Research Findings" by John Palmer, which includes in white text below the book a book-length document ("Notes on the Paranormal") on evidence for the paranormal, written by Ben Steigmann. The latter document contains very many links to online original source materials on psychical research.
- The page here gives links to hundreds of books you can read online, all dealing with the paranormal or spiritual phenomena. Very conveniently, we have a very long table of links, which is in chronological order. The list includes books providing evidence for the paranormal, as well as quite a few books trying to discredit such phenomena. Many of the books on the page are worth reading, and many others are not worth reading.
- The videos here and here seem to provide modern evidence for clairvoyance.

My very long post "Candid Confessions of the Scientists" contains links to very many papers and books by scientists who challenged the most prevalent thinking in fields such as chemistry, neuroscience, biochemistry, physics, natural history and cosmology. Many of that post's links can be followed for illumination on such topics. My very long post "120+ Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences" contains countless links to interesting papers and books on that topic. Below are books or articles on topics such as biology and cosmology and psychology:

- *Cosmo Sapiens: Human Evolution From the Origin of the Universe* by John Hands. The book is discussed in my post here.
- *A Fortunate Universe: Life in a Finely Tuned Cosmos* by astrophysics professor Geraint F. Lewis and astronomy postdoctoral researcher Luke A. Barnes. The book is discussed in my post here.
- *Why Us? How Science Rediscovered the Mystery of Ourselves* by physician James Le Fanu. The book is discussed in my post here.
- "Using statistical methods to model the fine-tuning of molecular machines and systems" by Steinar Thorvaldsen and Ola Hössjer. This peer-reviewed

paper in the mainstream Journal of Theoretical Biology discusses very well the evidence for fine-tuning in biology and physics.

- "The Cell as a Collection of Protein Machines: Preparing the Next Generation of Molecular Biologists" by Bruce Alberts. This peer-reviewed scientific paper is essential reading for students of biological complexity.
- "The Fine-Tuning of the Universe for Intelligent Life" by Luke A. Barnes. This paper (also available here) is a lengthy peer-reviewed paper discussing the evidence for fine-tuning in physics and cosmology.
- "Giving Up Darwin" by computer scientist David Gelernter. Trying to explaining the reasons why Darwinian ideas cannot explain the appearance of proteins, Gelernter does a good job, but actually underestimates the difficulties. He lists the average amino-acid length of a protein as 250, but eukaryotic proteins (like those in our body) actually have an average of about 472 amino acids, according to the paper here; and achieving proteins of that size by unguided processes is more than a billion trillion quadrillion times harder.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:22 AM No comments:

Labels: paranormal phenomena, recommended books, spiritual manifestations

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Saturday, August 12, 2023

Orbs Had a Starring Role in NASA/Congress UFO Hearings, So Why Are UFO/UAP Guys Still Ignoring Orb Photos?

At the link here you can read a full transcript of last month's US Congress hearing on UFOs, which occurred on July 26, 2023. The transcript often uses the term UAP. Some government committee or group is currently using the term UAP, previously defined as Unidentified Aerial Phenomena and then later more broadly defined as Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena.

A remarkable feature of the hearing is the repeated references to mysterious orbs, which occurred both using the term "orb" and using the term "sphere." Below are quotations that show some of the references.

Mysterious Orb Reference #1:

Ryan Graves: *"During a training mission in morning area whiskey seventy two, ten miles off the coast of Virginia Beach, two F18 super hornets were split by UAP.* ***The object described as a dark gray or a black cube inside of a clear sphere came within fifty feet of the lead aircraft*** *and was estimated to be five to fifteen feet in diameter. The mission commander terminated the flight immediately and returned base."*

The report by military pilot Ryan Graves refers to something occurring in 2014. We hear of two US fighter jets that have a close encounter with "a dark gray or a black cube inside of a clear sphere." We would not expect a drone or aerial vehicle to have such a shape.

Mysterious Orb Reference #2:

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SETI Scientist Misspoke Sagan-Style
► June (10)
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► March (8)
► February (7)

Later Graves tells a story that seems to repeat the same story above:

Ryan Graves: *One of these objects was, completely stationary at the exact entrance, to our working areas, not only geographically, but also at altitude. So it was right where all the jets are going essentially on the eastern seaboard. The two aircraft flew within about fifty feet of the object, and that was a a very close visual sighting.*

***Jamie Raskin**: And you were in one of the aircraft?*

***Ryan Graves:** I was not. I was there when the pilot landed. He canceled the mission after. I was there. He was in the ready room with all his gear on with his, mouth open. And I asked him what the problem was. And he said he almost hit one of those darn things.*

***Jamie Raskin:** He said he was fifty feet away from it.*

***Ryan Graves:** Yes, sir.*

***Jamie Raskin:** And his description of the object was consistent with the description you gave us before.*

***Ryan Graves:** A dark gray or a black cube inside of a clear sphere.*

***Jamie Raskin:** Inside of a clear sphere. Yes. And with no self evident propulsion system.*

***Ryan Graves:** No wings, no higher energy coming off of the vehicle. Nothing tethering it to the ground. And that was that was primarily what we were experiencing out there.*

So apparently the military was encountering mysterious orbs consisting of a clear sphere with a cube inside it, floating very high in the air.

Mysterious Orb Reference #3:

Later Graves seemed to again mention the same incident, this time supplying an estimate as to the size of the mysterious orb. He states, "The object described as a dark gray or a black cube inside of a clear sphere came within fifty feet of the lead aircraft and was estimated to be five to fifteen feet in diameter."

Mysterious Orb Reference #4:

Later Ryan Graves makes it clear that the sighting above was not some unique anomaly, and that such orbs were seen multiple times. We read this in the transcript:

► January (10)

► 2024 (105)
► 2023 (94)
► 2022 (92)
► 2021 (92)
► 2020 (99)
► 2019 (95)
► 2018 (93)
► 2017 (92)
► 2016 (92)
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► 2014 (163)
► 2013 (165)

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There Is No "Genetic Architecture of

Jamie Raskin: *Are there common characteristics to the UAPs that have been excited by different pilots, and can you describe what the convergence of descriptions is?*

Ryan Graves: *Certainly. We were primarily seeing dark gray or black cubes inside of a clear sphere.*

Jamie Raskin: *I'm sorry. Dark gray or black cubes?*

Ryan Graves: *Yes. Inside of a clear sphere where the apex or tips of the cube were touching the inside of that sphere. And that was primarily what was being reported when we were able to gain a visual tally of these objects. And that occurred over almost eight years. And as far as I know, it still occurred.*

Although Graves fails to tell us exactly how many of these mysterious orbs were seen in the sky, he very clearly indicates that they were seen multiple times. In fact he seems to suggest that sightings of these mysterious orbs occurred over a period of eight years, thereby suggesting that there were many sightings.

Mysterious Orb Reference #5:

In this reference a US congressman tells an account he received from military pilots**.**

Congressman Matt Gaetz: *My office received a protected disclosure from Eglen Air Force Base indicating that there was a UAP incident that required my attention....They were out on a test mission that day over the Gulf of Mexico, And when you're on a test mission, you're supposed to have clear air space. Not supposed to be anything that shows up.* ***And they saw a sequence of four craft in a clear diamond formation for which there is a radar sequence that I and I alone have observed in the United States Congress. One of the pilots goes to check out that Diamond formation and sees a large floating I can only describe as an orb, again, like I said, not of any human capability that I'm that I'm aware of.*** *And when he approached, he said that his radar went down. He said that his flir system malfunctioned and that he had to manually take this image from one of the lenses, and it was not automatic automated.*

This is a report that seems to be of great importance. We have one or more military aircraft pilots describing mysterious orbs in the sky, in a diamond-shaped formation. It's something so strange it is described as "not of any human capability I know of."

Mysterious Orb Reference #6:

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

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- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
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- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

Ryan Graves: *"The objects that we were seeing, they were spherical, and they were observed up to Mach two, which is a very in, non aerodynamic shape."*

This is an astonishing account. How could objects that were spherical move at Mach Two, twice the speed of sound? We can imagine no technology that could do that.

To get our next two references to mysterious orbs in a recent US government hearing, we must look at the transcript of the May 31, 2023 NASA public hearing on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena.

Mysterious Orb Reference #7:

Sean Kirkpatrick: *"The vast majority of what has been reported and what we have data on, a little less than half now, are orbs, round spheres."*

Sean Kirkpatrick is the the director of the All-Domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO) set up by NASA to investigate UAPs. Speaking rather clumsily (referring to slightly less than half as a "vast majority"), Kirkpatrick tells us that apparently almost half of the UFO/UAPs are orbs.

The next reference is by the same speaker, speaking a bit later in the same **NASA public hearing**:

Mysterious Orb Reference #8:

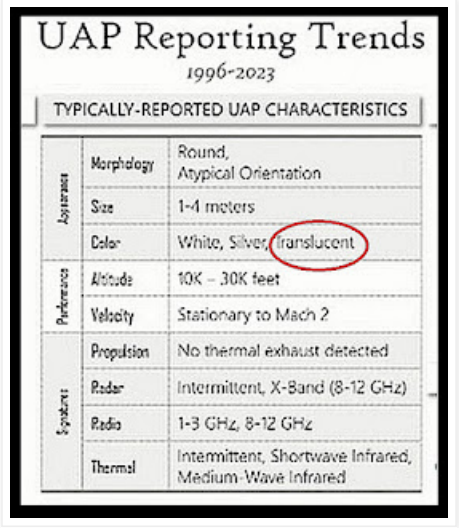
Sean Kirkpatrick: *This is a spherical orb metallic in the Middle East 2022 by an MQ-9. I will come back to the sensor question that David raised here in a moment. This is a typical example of the thing that we see most of. We see these all over the world and we see these in making very interesting apparent maneuvers.*

You can see here a video corresponding to this sighting. Look closely at the bottom right of the video. You will see a metallic-looking orb mysteriously speeding around. Note the very interesting comment: "This is a typical example of the thing that we see most of." The implication is that mysterious orbs are the type of UAP phenomena "that we see most of."

Mysterious Orb Reference #9:

At the 32:00 mark of the video here, a 4 -hour video of the NASA conference on UAP, we see a conference screen that has the visual below. The UAP refers to "unidentified aerial phenomena." The typical morphology or shape of the UAPs are listed as "round" or "atypical orientation." I have circled the word "translucent" on the screen. Apparently quite a few of the weird sky things NASA is studying are mysterious transparent orbs.

- A "Water Memory" Effect I Have Often Photographed
- 25 Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death
- Why the Origin of Language Is Inexplicable Under Orthodox Assumptions
- Visualizing a Top-Down Theory of Mind and Cosmic Connectivity
- Disastrous Blunders of the Experts
- Cosmic Coincidence Cover-up
- The Gigantic Missing Link of Biological Life
- Cosmic Fine-Tuning Visualized
- Why Machines Will Not Soon Be as Intelligent as Men
- Cloud Computing and the Concept of Non-local Consciousness
- There Is No Plausible Explanation For How Brains Can Store Very Long-Term Memory
- The Top 6 Problems With Using a Multiverse to Explain Cosmic Fitness
- "Vacuum Catastrophe" Should Be Called the Vacuum Miracle
- Why the Origin of Humans Is an Unsolved Mystery
- The Best Basis for Believing in an Afterlife Is Something Other Than Paranormal Phenomena
- Still More Dreams or Visions That Seemed to Foretell a Death
- The Evidence for Out-of-Body Experiences
- GOAL and Soul: Postulating What We Need to Explain Humans
- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation



The Congress Testimony About Mysterious Orbs Is Less Than a Hundredth of the Existing Orb Data

Although very interesting, the testimony above is less than a hundredth of the data we have regarding mysterious orbs. The facts are these:

- For decades very many photographers around the world have been getting mysterious orbs in their photos, both photos taken indoors in normal clean air and photos taken outdoors in normal clean air.
- Such photographs have been published on the Internet for decades.
- Photographs of mysterious orbs show them in a wide variety of colors. For example, using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right of the page, you can see 1491 photos I took of mysterious blue orbs. Using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right of the page, you can see 260 photos I took of mysterious green orbs. Using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right of the page, you can see 214 photos I took of mysterious pink orbs. Using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right of the page, you can see 231 photos I took of mysterious orange orbs. Using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right of the page, you can see 484 photos I took of mysterious purple orbs.
- Photographs of mysterious orbs very often show them seeming to be moving at a high speed. Using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right of the page, you can see 772 photos I took of what look like mysterious speeding orbs. There were never any flying insects around when I took any of these photos.

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

Other Blogs by This Author

- Head Truth
- Orb Pro

- Photographs of mysterious orbs very often show them seeming to be speeding at a rate so high that a kind of "string of pearls" effect occurs, in which we seem to see multiple position states of the same object moving very fast. Using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right of the page, you can see 100 photos showing such an effect. There were never any flying insects around when I took any of these photos.
- A careful analysis of the size of typical dust particles and typical water vapor particles indoors and outdoors reveals that such particles are very many times too small to explain photos of mysterious orbs taken in dry clean air. Airborne dust particles indoors are almost never greater than 10 microns, which is only about 1/1500 (one fifteen hundredth) of the area in front of a camera lens, way too small to produce a decent-looking mysterious orb in a photo (something typically taking up 1% or more of the total photo area). Outdoors, airborne dust particles or water vapor particles are almost never greater than 1 micron, which is only about 1/15000 (one fifteen thousandth) of the area in front of a camera lens, way too small to produce a decent-look mysterious orb in a photo (something typically taking up 1% or more of the total photo area). Even heavy smog outdoors is insufficient to produce orbs in photos outdoors. The only natural effects capable of producing orbs in photos are visible fog, visible mist and visible heavy dust, which will cover the entire photo area in circles.
- Orb photographers following best practices are careful to list weather conditions when photographing mysterious orbs outdoors. I have published thousands of dramatic outdoor photos of mysterious orbs in which I listed in the posts that there was no fog, mist or precipitation outdoors, excluding such things as explanations for such photos.
- Mysterious orbs appearing in photos very often have a striped appearance, which may consist of one or more very noticeable stripes. Such a thing was never predicted by skeptics claiming natural explanations of such photos. You can finger-scroll through the free online book here to see 800 photos I have taken of mysterious striped orbs.
- Mysterious orbs appearing in photos have very often shown a dramatic repeating pattern effect, in which the same distinctive pattern may occur multiple times in photos taken by the same photographer, with the

External Sites

- Top 20 Cosmology Blogs
- My Free Books on Archive.org

Featured Post

Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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Labels

- "Oumuamua (1)
- 3D printing (1)
- abiogenesis (1)
- abundance (1)
- acupuncture (1)
- after death communication (2)
- age of mankind (1)
- age of universe (3)
- aging (2)
- AI (1)
- alien abductions (2)
- alien attack (1)
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

pattern repetitions not occurring in consecutive photos. Many examples can be seen on this page, and some examples from that page are repeated below.

- Mysterious orbs often have a transparent appearance. Using the link here and continuing to press Older Posts at the bottom right of the page, you can see 560 photos of transparent orbs. But about as often, a mysterious orb will appear as a bright circle that does not look transparent.
- Mysterious orbs have been seriously studied by PhD scientists who regarded them as something much more than an illusory effect, including scientists such as physics PhD Klaus Heinemann (whose views about them are discussed in this article) and astrophysics PhD Massimo Teodorani, the author of many peer-reviewed scientific papers including the long 2009 paper "Spherical Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena: Scientific Observations and Physical Hypotheses, Danger Evaluation For Aviation and Future Observational Plan," a paper which tells us that "Unidentified anomalous phenomena of spherical shape are increasingly reported in many areas of the world." See here for a discussion of the most interesting parts of the long paper.
- Very many photographers other than myself have published dramatic photos of mysterious orbs, and by using the link here you can see photographs of mysterious orb taken by many other photographers.
- Although most mysterious orbs appearing in photos seem like "instant only" effects not matching persistent objects seen with the eye, very many people claim to have seen mysterious orbs with their own eyes. By downloading the pdf file version of the SCU Review 4.1 using this link, you can see (on page 10) the full January 2, 1945 New York Times cover page story reporting that US pilots had been reporting for more than a month "balls of fire" called "foo fighters" that flew along with the planes, appearing in colors of red, or in groups of three or fifteen. An analysis of reports at the National UFO Reporting Center leads to the conclusion that orb-like UFOs are more than four times more common than disk-like UFOs, with there being more than 37,000 reports of orb-like UFOs and only 8602 reports of disk-like UFOs. At the link here you can read a Washington Post account of a 1987 sighting by a Boeing 747 cargo jet pilot who reported a walnut-shaped object tailing his jet for a long time, supposedly one twice as big as an aircraft carrier. The

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
- anthropic principle (22)
- antimatter (3)
- apocalypse (5)
- apparition (76)
- apparition acting like a death notification (22)
- apparition of the living (6)
- apparition seen by multiple witnesses (16)
- apports (5)
- aquatic mega-patternization (1)
- archaeology (1)
- argument against brain storage of all memories (20)
- argument for soul (17)
- argument from evil (3)
- Artemis (1)
- artificial intelligence (7)
- artificial planets (1)
- artificial worlds (1)
- asteroid mining (1)
- asteroids (1)
- astral projection (1)
- astrobiology (2)
- astroengineering (3)
- astronomy (14)
- atheism (3)
- augmented reality (2)
- aura (1)
- austerity (1)
- Australian mystery lights (1)
- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

four posts below include very many accounts of people seeing mysterious orbs with the naked eye:

Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 1 of 4)

Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 2 of 4)

Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 3 of 4)

Naked Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 4 of 4)

Below we see some of the vast number of very interesting results I have published. First is a photo from December 9, 2014 showing a large orb in Grand Central Terminal in New York:

Next (taken with a different camera) is a strong pattern repetition occurring on the same day in 2017 (between the first and second photos I took photos with the same camera, ones that showed no such pattern):

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

The next shows a similar pattern repetition on another day. Again there were quite a few photos taken by the same camera in between these photos that showed no such pattern:

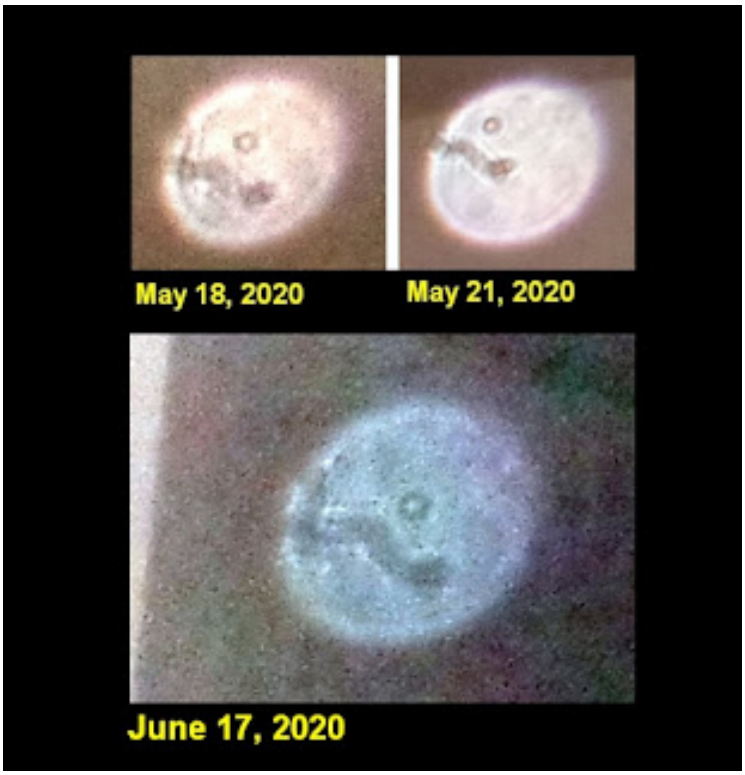
Below is a repeating orb pattern that I observed in photos occurring only a minute apart. An intervening photo showed no such effect.

I took the photos below about 36 minutes apart. Photos in between these two showed no such effect.

Below is a repeating orb pattern that I observed in photos taken an hour and twenty-one minutes apart. Photos in between these two showed no such thing. The pattern resembles a stick figure of a leaping ballet dancer.

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

In 2020 I got three examples of the "ribbon and ring" pattern shown below (many photos in between these taken by the same camera showed no such pattern).



While photographing falling water drops, which I did almost every day for many months, I would very often get a super-abundant orb pattern repetition effect, with dramatically distinctive orb patterns often mysteriously appearing and persisting for many hundreds of consecutive photos, before mysteriously disappearing. In such cases the same orb pattern would appear multiple times in the same photo, with hundreds of consecutive photos showing the same level of pattern repetition. Often a face-like orb pattern

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

would appear and persist for hundreds of consecutive photos, with each photo showing multiple cases of such a pattern. The very long free online book here photographically documents the effect about as exhaustively as you could document anything.

All of this raises the question: why has almost all of this dramatic evidence regarding mysterious orbs been ignored by almost all of the people who have spent lots of time investigating UFOs and UAP (Unidentified Aerial Phenomena or Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena)? I can think of several possible reasons:

- **Possible reason #1: a hardware "nuts and bolts" or "saucer" bias**. When it first entered public consciousness around the late 1940's, UFOs were often described as "flying saucers." People had the idea that UFOs were metal "nuts and bolts" spaceships from another planet. This may have biased subsequent investigations towards ignoring reports that do not have a saucer shape or a disk shape.
- **Possible reason #2: a materialist bias towards tangible metal objects.** People interested in UFOs often seem to be inclined towards materialism. We often hear such people arguing for extraterrestrial life using common but dubious arguments based on materialism, including very doubtful claims that life will appear on any planet with the right conditions, and claims that once a planet has some life, such life will have a high chance of evolving into intelligence. Often being transparent, mysterious orbs may conflict with such materialist ideas. Sightings and photos of mysterious orbs may suggest the idea that there may be some non-material intelligence or spiritual intelligence that is interacting with humans, an idea that may make materialists uncomfortable. So, when collecting evidence for UFOs and UAP, such people may tend to overlook or downplay anything like a mysterious orb (particularly one that is transparent), and emphasize reports of things that looked like they may have been metal spaceships.

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

- **Possible reason #3: photographers of mysterious orbs are not very good at publicizing their work.** This is probably a major factor. Let's take someone like me. I'm very good about publishing only entirely authentic photos of the mysterious, and I'm very good about things such as recording the date when the photo was taken, recording the weather conditions if the photo was taken outside, and also classifying the photos using appropriate tags. But I'm not very good about publicizing my work. I hear people mention that there are special methods used by Facebook pros and Twitter pros to make their work "go viral." But I'm not familiar with such methods, and I'm kind of "all thumbs" when it comes to effectively using hashtags. And so it probably is for most photographers of mysterious orbs. I could no doubt get a lot more publicity for my work if I were to pay for advertising, but my skinflint rule is to never pay a cent for advertising. Being already "in the red" because of photographic expenses that greatly exceed any earnings I made from photography or blogging, I have never made a net cent from my photographic or blogging activities. I don't wish to go deeper "in the red" by paying for advertising.
- **Possible reason #4: snobbery in academia and at NASA**. People with PhD's often act like snobs, and some of them would rather spend an afternoon scrutinizing the most vacuous professor speculation than spend an hour studying very good evidence gathered by laymen.
- **Possible reason #5: some kind of "stick to my domain" thinking.** One possibility is that people at NASA or astronomers have a kind of "my interest stops at your door" attitude, which they use as an excuse for ignoring all kinds of fascinating anomalous phenomena people report seeing or photographing inside buildings, under an excuse of "I only study sky and space stuff." That might be an excuse for turning a blind eye to all of the mysterious orb photos taken in people's

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

> home, although it would not be an excuse for ignoring the equally great number of mysterious orbs photos taken outdoors, usually in dry clean air.

The universe does not give up its secrets easily, and does not tend to reward people who try to resolve great spooky mysteries while taking attitudes such as, "I'm not going to pay attention to spooky things outside of my comfort zone."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:26 AM No comments:

Labels: orbs, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations, UAP, UFO, UFOs

Friday, August 4, 2023

Analyzing the Most Shocking Parts of the US Congress UFO Hearing of 7/26/23

At the link here you can read a full transcript of last week's US Congress hearing on UFOs, which occurred on July 26, 2023. The transcript often uses the term UAP. Some government committee or group is currently using the term UAP, previously defined as Unidentified Aerial Phenomena and then later more broadly defined as Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena.

Before examining this testimony, I should discuss how there's a lot of difference between the evidence value of first-hand witness testimony, explicit second-hand testimony from a named source, and second-hand testimony from an unnamed source. If a person named Bill says that he directly saw something, that has a certain value as evidence, assuming the person is a reliable source. If a person named Bill merely describes evidence from a named source (received either by directly listening to that source or by reading something the source wrote that is not available to us), that has a lesser value as evidence. For one thing, there is always the possibility that Bill is not correctly describing what the source said. Perhaps Bill is exaggerating what the source said, or not quite accurately quoting it. Plus there is the fact that in order for us to believe the story we now have to assume the trustworthiness or accuracy of two different people: both Bill and the source he quotes (who might be untrustworthy). A situation that tends to be weaker evidence than both of these cases is a case in which Bill tells some account he got from an unnamed source. That type of account in general tends to have much less value as evidence, because of several reasons: (1) we have no way of judging the reliability of the original source, because Bill has not named such a source; (2) we have no way of knowing whether the unnamed source actually saw something with his own eyes, or whether the unnamed source was merely passing on something he heard from some other source.

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

Let's give some examples, using a quality-of-evidence number in which 10 is the best evidence and 0 is the worst evidence:

- Bill says he saw John Jolter kill Mr. Smith -- evidence value of 9 (assuming Bill is trustworthy and has no motive to lie on this matter).
- Bill says he heard Dave say that he saw John Jolter kill Mr. Smith -- evidence value of 7 (assuming Bill is trustworthy and has no motive to lie on this matter). The evidence value is reduced, because Bill may be misstating what he heard from Dave and either Dave or Bill may be lying or exaggerating.
- Bill says he heard a source he will not name say he saw that John killed Mr. Smith -- evidence value of 4 (assuming Bill is trustworthy and has no motive to lie on this matter). The evidence value is reduced, because Bill may be misstating what he heard from this source, and we have no way of judging how reliable this source is, because Bill will not name his source.
- Bill says he heard a source he will not name say that he heard Mr. Smith died from an accident -- evidence value of 2 (assuming Bill is trustworthy and has no motive to lie on this matter). The evidence value here is very low, because we have no idea of how long the chain of testimony is. Did Bill's source directly see Mr. Smith die from an accident, or did that source merely hear from someone else that Mr. Smith died from an accident? It could be that Bill has merely heard a rumor that has been passed around between several different persons, and does not correspond to the truth.

Below are some of the most interesting quotes from the July 26, 2023 testimony to the US Congress:

Ryan Graves: *"During a training mission in morning area whiskey seventy two, ten miles off the coast of Virginia Beach, two F18 super hornets were split by UAP.* ***The object described as a dark gray or a black cube inside of a clear sphere came within fifty feet of the lead aircraft*** *and was estimated to be five to fifteen feet in diameter. The mission commander terminated the flight immediately and returned base."*

The report refers to something occurring in 2014. We may presume that by "split by UAP" Graves meant some type of unidentified object coming between the two jet fighters (the F18 super hornets), or existing between their flight path The

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

description of the object as a "dark gray or a black cube inside of a clear sphere" is startling. We would not expect a drone or aerial vehicle to have such a shape, although conceivably some kind of balloon might look such a way. Graves mentions he was involved with the fighter pilots reporting this event, but does not name the specific persons who reported it. Much later in the testimony, when asked by Jamie Raskin to discuss "what is the most vivid concrete sighting with the naked eye," Graves repeats the account above, again mentioning a sighting within fifty feet, but making it clear some other unnamed person (a pilot) reported this to him. So we have the drawback that this is second-hand evidence, since Graves does not claim to be one of those two pilots.

Ryan Graves: "*Pilots are reporting UAP [unidentified anomalous phenomena] at altitudes that appear above them at forty thousand feet, potentially in low earth orbit or in the gray zone below the Carmen line. Making inexplicable maneuvers like right hand turns and retrograde orbits or j hooks. Sometimes these reports are reoccurring. With numerous recent sightings north of Hawaii and in the North Atlantic."*

That is a very interesting claim, but the problem is that it is second-hand. Who were the pilots who reported such things? We do not know. Did Graves directly receive such reports from these pilots, or was it some deal where Graves heard from someone else that someone else had seen such things? We do not know.

David Fravor: "*They're, the controller told us that these objects, had been observed for over two weeks* ***coming down from over eighty thousand feet. Rapidly descending to twenty thousand feet, hanging out for hours and then going straight back up*** *for those that don't realize above eighty thousand feet is space."*

That is a very interesting report of mysterious things rapidly coming down from more than ten miles high in the sky to an altitude of only about four miles high in the sky. But the report is second hand. We don't know who this controller is, and whether he directly saw such things or was told such things by other people. Fravor then describes seeing some mysterious "Tic Tac" object flying over the water. It's a rather technical account that the average person may find hard to follow, so I won't quote it. But apparently it's quite a juicy case of a speeding anomaly.

David Fravor: *"We have nothing that can stop in mid air and go the other direction nor do we have anything that can like in our situation, come down from space, hang out for three hours, and go back up."*

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

Here Fravor reports on some hard-to-explain behavior he previously said that some controller had reported, but we still have not heard any first-hand testimony of someone seeing such a thing or detecting it.

Robert Garcia: *"Mr. Grusch, finally, do you believe that our government is in possession of UAPs?"*

David Grusch: *"Absolutely based on interviewing, over forty witnesses over four years."*

Robert Garcia: *"And and where?"*

David Grusch: *"I know the exact locations, and and those locations were provided to the inspector general and some of which to the intelligence committees, I actually had the people with the firsthand knowledge provide a protected disclosure to the inspector general."*

Unfortunately, this testimony has very little value as evidence. It merely means that David Grusch has come to believe that the US government has something like vehicles or wreckage it can't explain, based on things he has heard from over forty people. But we have no specifics about who these people are and what they saw, and we don't know what fraction of them made such a claim to Grusch. We have no idea how long the chain of testimony is here. The people Grusch has talked to could merely be passing on groundless rumors. It means little that Grusch has come to believe such a thing. People come to hold false beliefs for any of a thousand and one reasons. The fact that Grusch claims to know "the exact locations" also means little. Grusch may merely have heard rumors about spooky things stored at particular military sites, and may have come to believe such rumors. That does not mean that such rumors are true. Here we should remember Donald Rumsfeld's famous quote in which he said he knew where the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction were. Such weapons of mass destruction were never found in Iraq.

We should not forget here that authorities believe all kinds of silly things that are untrue and unreasonable. I could easily insert here a thousand words listing all of the untrue and unreasonable beliefs held by US professors on many different topics. In academia you have thousands of professors believing things that are not merely unproven, but which also are very improbable or impossible because of various reasons and evidence such professors have failed to study or consider.

Ryan Graves: "*Some of the behaviors that we saw in a working area, we would see these objects, being at zero point zero mach. That's zero air speed. Over certain pieces of the ground. So what that*

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

means, just like a river, if you throw a bobber in, it's gonna float downstream. These objects were staying completely stationary and category for hurricane winds. These same objects would then accelerate to supersonic speeds, one point one, one point two mach. And they would do so in very erratic and behavior is that we don't I don't have an explanation for."

The transcript reads "category for hurricane winds," and we can presume he means "Category 4 hurricane winds." Unfortunately, the claim is preceded by "we saw" rather than "I saw." We don't know here whether Graves is passing on stories he heard from other people, which may have been mere rumors. Could a pilot have seen some kind of UFO staying motionless in the sky during a Category 4 hurricane? I doubt that, because military jets would not have been flying during such a hurricane.

***Jamie Raskin**: "Are there common characteristics to the UAPs that have been excited by different pilots, and can you describe what the convergence of descriptions is?"*

***Ryan Graves:** "Certainly. We were primarily seeing dark gray or black cubes inside of a clear sphere?"*

***Jamie Raskin:** "I'm sorry. Dark gray or black cubes?"*

***Ryan Graves:** Yes. Inside of a clear sphere where the apex or tips of the cube were touching the inside of that sphere. And that was primarily what was being reported when we were able to gain a visual tally of these objects. And that occurred over almost eight years. And as far as I know, it still occurred."*

Here we have some intriguing testimony of pilots seeing gray or black cubes inside of a clear sphere. Unfortunately Graves uses the term "we were primarily seeing" and "what was being reported" which does not clearly qualify as eyewitness testimony. Graves does not tell us that he himself saw such a thing. He mentions "over almost eight years," but fails to mention how many sightings like the one he describes occurred.

As a photographer of mysterious orbs, I am quite interested in this testimony, and I would like to get more details and specifics. Could there be any natural explanation for a cube seen inside a clear sphere? We can imagine a balloon device that might look in such a way, possibly a balloon with some type of electronic device inside it. What Graves should supply is specifics, telling us exactly how many of these anomalies were reported, the estimated size, the dates the reports occurred, exactly who reported seeing these anomalies, and so forth. In the sketchy

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

form quoted above, the testimony does not have much value. But much more specific testimony on the same sightings might have lots of value.

Ryan Graves: *"In the two thousand and three time frame,* ***a large group of Boeing contractors were operating near one of the launch facilities at Vanderburg Air four space when they observed a very large hundred yard sided, red square, approach the base from the ocean and hover at low altitude over one of the launch facilities. This object remained for about forty five seconds or so before darting off over the mountains.*** *There was a similar event within twenty four hours later in the evening. This was a morning event. I believe eight forty five in the morning. Later in the evening post sunset, there were reports of other sightings on base including some aggressive behaviors, these objects were approaching some of the security guards at rapid speeds, before darting off And this is information that was received through one of the, witnesses that have approached me at Americans for Safe Aerospace."*

Anna Paulina Luna: *"Was this documented in any official form, whether it was police blotter?"*

Ryan Graves: *"Yes. They had official documentation and records from the event that they witnessed, held over the years."*

Here we have what sounds like an extremely sensational anomaly: a report of a year 2003 sighting of a giant square-shaped UFO or UAP hovering for 45 seconds over a major US military base, supposedly seen by a "large group of Boeing contractors." Unfortunately, the testimony is not first hand testimony. Graves did not see such a thing himself, and he has not given us the name of any person who saw such a thing. The story could simply be a rumor. Maybe there was no such group of contractors seeing such a thing, and someone started a rumor that such a sighting had occurred. Who made this estimate that something a hundred meters in size was being seen? Was it a single person, or each of the people who saw such a thing? We don't know. A single person could have misjudged the size of something that was much smaller. The claim that there was "official documentation and records from the event that they witnessed" does not add very much value as evidence, because no specifics have been given about what is in such documentation, and the documentation has not been provided. Investigators should probe carefully into this report, and try to obtain specific eyewitness testimony of the people who saw this event.

Ryan Graves: *"The objects that we were seeing, they were spherical, and they were observed up to Mach two, which is a very in, non aerodynamic shape."*

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

Spherical objects moving at a speed up to Mach Two (twice the speed of sound) would be a very big deal, since we know of no earthly technology that would allow spherical objects to move that fast. But the testimony here leaves room for doubt. How was that speed estimate obtained? And how do we know that the objects supposedly moving that fast were spherical-shaped? It would seem that visually identifying some object as spherical and clocking an object's speed are two different processes. So it would take a very tight coordination between such processes for you to say that a spherical object accelerated to nearly Mach Two. We don't know whether so tight a coordination occurred. Who made these speed estimates? Maybe they are just wild guesses. And we don't know whether Graves is passing on some story or legend of spherical objects accelerating so quickly, a story that may be a mere rumor. Rather than vague phrases such as "they were observed up to Mach Two," we need specific details about who made an observation, when he made the observation, and what type of technique he used to make a speed estimate.

Jared Moskowitz: *"What about what they look like? How close did you get? Did you see a seam or a rivet or a section. And what I mean is, obviously, the jets you're flying have all those things. Did these objects have those?"*

David Fravor: *"Wanna go ride?"*

Ryan Graves: *"I didn't have I didn't have the detail to be able to tell that."*

David Fravor: *"So we got within a half mile at Tic Tac, which people say that's pretty far, but it's in airplanes that's actually relatively close. No. It was perfectly white, smooth, no windows. Although when we did take the original ... video that is out there, when you put it on a big screen, it actually had two little objects came out of the bottom of it. But other than that, no no windows, no seams, no nothing."*

The Tic Tac UFO is an interesting anomaly. But Fravor's testimony is not all that compelling. He reports no one saw any features on the object shaped like a Tic Tac, but since the object was half a mile away, that does not mean the object was featureless.

Jared Moskowitz: *"Mister Grusch, as a result of your previous government work, have you met with people with direct knowledge or have direct knowledge yourself of non human origin craft?"*

David Grusch: *"Yes. I personally interviewed those individuals."*

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

This means little, because the phrase "direct knowledge" is vague. The "yes" Grusch gives could refer to people who have merely heard rumors, or people who saw strange things in the sky that they presumed were "non human origin craft." The answer Grusch gives is not as compelling as someone saying, "I talked to people who claimed that they had seen captured UFOs." And if he had said that, there would be many questions still to be asked, such as how reliable are these people, how long was the gap between the story and the reported observation, what caused them to think they had seen "non human origin craft" and so forth.

Tim Burchett: *"Can you give me the names and titles of the people with direct firsthand knowledge, and access to some of this crash retrieval some of these crash retrieval programs and maybe which facilities, military bases that would the recovered material would be in. I know a lot of Congress talked about we're gonna go to area fifty one and, you know, and there's nothing there anymore anyway. It's just you know, and we move like a glacier as soon as we announce it. I'm sure the moving vans would pull up, but please."*

David Grusch: *"I can't discuss it publicly, but I did provide that information both to the Intel committees in the inspector general."*

Burchett should be congratulated for asking the right type of question. David Grusch so far has provided no specifics to back up his claim of recovered UFO vehicles or crash wreckage from UFOs. It seems every time he is asked for specifics, he appeals to secrecy, saying he can't give details in public, or claims that he has given the details before (referring to some secret testimony that no journalist can verify). Therefore, Grusch's public testimony thus far has very little value as evidence. So far, there's no reason why we should believe in crashed UFOs or UAP based on anything Grusch has publicly said. He could be merely passing on rumors that slowly grew after events such as the Roswell incident.

Eric Burlison: ***"****The concept that an alien species that's technologically advanced enough to travel billions in the light years gets here and somehow is incompetent enough to not survive Earth or crashes is is something that I find a little bit far fetched. And with that being said, you have mentioned that there's interdimensional potential could you expand on that?"*

David Grusch: *"Oh, yeah. To answer your first question, and, you know, I'm here as a fact, witness, an expert, but I I will give you a, a theoretical framework, at least, to work off to kind of spouse, crashes, regardless of, you know, your level of sentience, right? You know, planes crash, cars crash, N number of sorties, what, however, high, a small percentage are going to end in, you know, mission failure, if you will, as we say, in the in the air force. And then in*

terms of, multi dimensionality, that kind of thing. The the framework that I'm familiar with, for example, is something called the holographic principle, both it's it derives itself from general relativity and, quantum mechanics. And that is if you wanna imagine, a three d objects such as yourself casting a shadow onto a two d surface. That's the holographic principle. So you can be projected, quasi projected from higher dimensional space to lower dimensional. It's a scientific trope that you can actually cross literally as far as I understand, but there's probably guys with PhDs that we could probably argue that."

The point that Burlison has made is a very good one, one that I previously made in my June post "Reasons for Doubting Claims the US Got Technology From Crashed ET UFOs." Given the incredible difficulties of traveling between inhabited solar systems, it makes no sense to believe that some civilization capable of traveling such distances would be so incompetent as to produce spacecraft that might crash on Earth once they had got here. Grusch's response is very weak. "Planes crash, cars crash" is a principle involving the state of current human technology, not some principle that we can apply to some godlike beings capable of traveling between inhabited solar systems. We can reasonably presume that within a few centuries we will have advanced our technology so that planes never crash and cars never crash.

Matt Gaetz: *"And they saw a sequence of four craft in a clear diamond formation for which there is a radar sequence that I and I alone have observed in the United States Congress. O**ne of the pilots goes to check out that Diamond formation and sees a large floating I can only describe as an orb,** again, like I said, not of any human capability that I'm that I'm aware of. And when he approached, he said that his radar went down. He said that his flir system malfunctioned and that he had to manually take this image from one of the lenses, and it was not automatic automated.*"

As someone who has had very great success in photographing mysterious orbs, including more than 800 mysterious striped orbs, I find this account interesting. But by itself this quote has not much value as evidence, for it is not a first-hand account, and we are given neither the name of the person who saw this, nor a copy of the image. Journalists should ask Matt Gaetz if he can provide more specific information on this incident, such as the name of someone who reported seeing it.

Nancy Mace: *"Okay. And I can't ask when do you think this occurred? If you believe we have crashed craft stated earlier, do we have the bodies of the pilots who piloted this craft?"*

David Grusch: *"As I've stated publicly already in my News Nation interview, Biologics came with some of these recoveries. Yeah."*

Nancy Mace: *"Were they, I guess, human or non human biologics?"*

David Grusch: *"Non human, and that was the assessment of people, with direct knowledge on the program I talked to that are currently still on the program."*

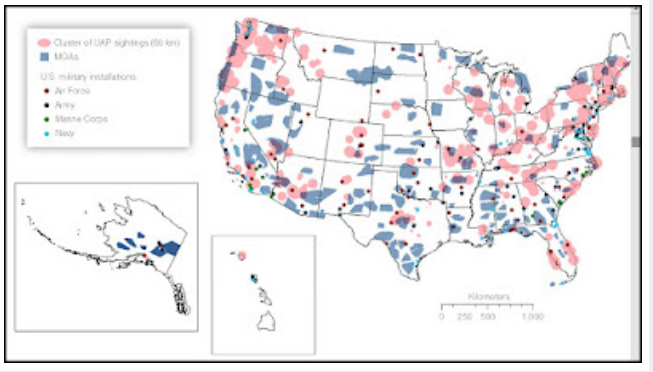
Some people are trying to make this exchange seem like a big deal, but from an evidence standpoint, it hardly amounts to a hill of beans. Without giving any public details, Grusch has somehow got the idea that some sort of spooky craft have crashed, and claims he was told that there were "biologics" recovered that were "non-human." That means very little, given that non-human biological life is all over the place on planet Earth.

The hearing provided little in the way of Grade A top-notch evidence such as someone telling us exactly what he saw, or someone reading an account written by someone just after he saw something strange. But the hearing did give some intriguing "leads" that should be carefully investigated further. Journalists should ask the figures quoted above for more specifics on the interesting tales and claims they have made. Such people should be asked repeatedly questions like these:

- Can you give me the name of a person who saw what you describe, so I can interview him?
- Do you have any photographs or videos or documents that can corroborate these accounts?
- Could it be that the story you just told me is one that arose as a mere rumor, after passing around through many different hands?
- If you cannot provide the name of a person who saw what you describe, can you at least give me some testimony that person wrote down very soon after seeing what he saw?

Responding to this testimony before the US Congress, some scientists have given us responses that sound like lazy, anomaly-fearful Professor Goofus talk. In my next post I will give an example of such a response.

Below is a visual showing US UAP/UFO sighting "hotspots," in pink, from page 13 of the recent RAND Corporation report you can read here. The spots in blue are military operation areas. Based on this visual, there does not seem to be much of a correlation between the UAP hotspots and the military operation areas.



Posted by Mark Mahin at 6:37 AM No comments:

Labels: orbs, paranormal phenomena, UFO, UFOs

Thursday, July 27, 2023

Psychiatrists Have No Credible Explanation for Apparition Sightings

Psychiatrists are famous for pretending to know things that they don't actually know. For many decades psychiatrists peddled at high prices extremely dubious Freudian speculations about the causes of human behavior, such as the idea that a son's inner conflicts stem from his repressed lust for his mother. Around 1960 such explanations were all the rage, and Park Avenue psychoanalyst followers of Freud were raking in fortunes. Within a few decades such explanations fell out of favor, and now Freud's theories are mainly regarded as pseudoscience. Psychiatrists replaced their misguided Freud enthusiasm with neural explanation enthusiasms, mostly misguided ones. Supported by a pharmaceutical industry that stood to take in countless millions or billions from such stories, our psychiatrists told us for at least two decades (1990-2010) that diseases such as depression are caused by chemical imbalances in the brain or shortages of serotonin. Recently there has been widespread discussion of a meta-analysis claiming that such claims lack any sound scientific basis. A regular reader of the illuminating Mad in America web site (www.madinamerica.com) will read very many other cases of psychiatrists pretending to know things they do not actually know.

Once again, we have in the press a case of a psychiatrist trying to make us think that he knows something that he does not actually know. The psychiatrist is Max Pemberton, who tries to make us think (in a Daily Mail article he wrote) that he knows what causes apparition sightings. I am unable to find any previous writings he has made on this topic (in particular, using Google Scholar I cannot find any paper he has written on this topic).

Pemberton starts out by making the claim that the brain is the most complex object in the universe, which is a perfect example of authorities making claims they should not make, given that humans are ignorant about what exists on 99.99999999% of all planets in the universe, and given that human *bodies* are objects far more complex than human brains. Pemberton then states this: "I was fascinated to read in the Mail Santa Montefiore's account of seeing the spirit of her late sister, Tara Palmer Tomkinson, sitting on her bed, and the subsequent flurry of reports last week from readers who had also 'encountered' a loved one after they had died." Pemberton then immediately begins to call such reports "hallucinations," even though he does not mention interviewing Ms. Montefiore. We may wonder whether he has forgotten the principle of, "Don't point a psychiatric finger at someone until you have interviewed that person at length."

Continuing to make an unjustified use of the word "hallucination" or "hallucinatory" Pemberton says this: "Studies show that between 30 and 50 per cent of people who have lost their spouse experience at least one hallucinatory episode in which they see their loved one." No, studies do not show that large fractions of those who have lost their spouse have *hallucinations* of seeing their loves ones. Studies merely indicate that large numbers of spouses report seeing their loved ones after death, and such studies do nothing to tell us about the cause of such reports.

Pemberton cites a 90% figure from Japan, saying "Research in Japan showed that 90 per cent of widows there experienced them." Pemberton then attempts an explanation:

"Of course, some look for a spiritual explanation, but from a psychological perspective, it seems to me fairly clear-cut. Seeing a dead person is a form of wish-fulfilment, the brain's way of giving the bereaved person what they so desperately want, which is just a little longer with the person they've lost."

This explanation is nonsensical. People don't have hallucinations just because they want to see something. A lonely sex-craving young man alone on a Saturday night in his apartment will never see a hallucination of a naked buxom blonde in front of him. Needy people with little money don't have hallucinations of stacks of money on their table. The long-suffering fans of poorly performing sports teams don't see hallucinations in which their beloved team wins the game despite actually losing. And when US mothers and fathers saw their children go away for years to distant lands to fight in wars such as World War II or the Vietnam War, none of such parents saw an apparition of the child they longed to see, unless their offspring had died. There is no

tendency of healthy human beings to hallucinate seeing things that they long for. And in a large fraction of the cases in which people report seeing an apparition of a deceased human, the person was not longing to see such a person.

Pemberton has just contrived a "you hallucinate what you long for" explanation that does not correspond to the way human minds work, and does not correspond to the facts about apparition sightings (which often involve two or more people seeing the same apparition). Faced with ambiguous or hazy data that can be interpreted in many ways, humans often interpret such data in a way that fits their desires. But that common type of "seeing what you want to see" interpretation doesn't involve having hallucinations of something you wanted to see.

Pemberton then tells us that ghost sightings are caused by "the power of love." No, love doesn't have any power to make you see a person in your house who isn't there. There's no love greater than the love of a parent for a child, but parents with runaway or missing children never see apparitions of the missing child in their home unless the child has died. If Pemberton were a scholar of apparition sightings, he would know that a large fraction of apparition sightings are reported by people who had either no great love for the ghostly figure seen, or were not at all wishing to see any apparition of such a person. Follow the links in my post here, and you can read of hundreds of such cases, most of which involve cases in which people saw an apparition of someone who they did not even know was dead, someone who died about the same time.

The fires of passionate youthful love typically wane by the time a couple reaches old age, and bodies turn ugly; and a large fraction of old married couples quarrel or have mixed feelings toward each other. There is no sense in an idea that 50% (or as many as 90%) of widows might hallucinate a ghost because of some overwhelming passionate desire to see their deceased love one again. I would imagine that fewer than 15% of old widows or old widowers have any such overwhelming desire.

Later Pemberton reports a case of a man who claimed to see repeated apparitions of his deceased wife. Pemberton says, "His visions may well have been a clever trick played on him by his brain, and easily explained by neurochemical interactions." When psychiatrists or neuroscientists don't have explanations, their last-resort fallback is to make vague brief empty hand-waving references to things such as "neurochemical interactions."

Pemberton provides no actual evidence for these explanations, citing no scientific studies in favor of any of them. He sounds like

someone just coming up with whatever guesses might pop into his head. Something weightier than Pemberton's vacuous speculations is the article "Ghosts, visions and voices," written by a psychiatrist (Frances Klemperer) who actually includes a few references to scientific papers. But none of the references are to compelling studies that support any of Klemperer's explanations.

Klemperer makes the following attempts to explain apparitions, in this order:

(1) Undigested food (an absurd explanation, since people constantly have undigested food in their stomachs).

(2) Demons or *jinn* deceiving humans.

(3) Vitamin deficiency from fasting, obviously a poor explanation since 98% of people reporting apparitions were not fasting enough to have vitamin deficiencies, and there is no reason why a vitamin deficiency would cause you to see a ghost.

(4) A transient psychosis produced by self-flagellation, obviously a poor explanation since 99.9% of people reporting apparitions were not flagellating themselves before seeing the apparition.

(5) "Prolonged vigils" in which people see apparitions because of very long sleep deprivation, obviously a poor explanation since 99% of people reporting apparitions had not very long gone without sleep.

(6) "Prolonged introspection" which causes hallucinations, a bad explanation because there in no evidence that introspection causes people to see sights of deceased relatives, and 99% of the time people who report such things were not previously engaging in prolonged introspection.

(7) Head injuries, a bad explanation because of a lack of any evidence head injuries cause people to see apparitions of deceased people, and a lack of such injuries preceding sightings of apparitions.

(8) Misinterpretations of real objects, an explanation useful only for people claiming to see some ghost at a far distance, not any of the far more common cases of people reporting an apparition right in front of them.

(9) Waking dreams, in which someone reports his dream as something he saw when awake, an explanation useless for explaining 95% of apparition sightings, which do not occur when someone has just awaken from a dream, or which involve claims of clear perception of deceased people seen after someone has

awoken, such as a case of someone saying, "I awoke, and there was my dead mother, sitting right on the edge of my bed."

(10) Misidentification of a sound, such as someone hearing something on TV and misidentifying it as his name being called, an explanation useless for explaining reports of visual ghost sightings.

(11) "Severe stress may precipitate transient, complex hallucinations, which the subject recognises as arising from his or her imagination." The claim is a dubious one, and is useless for explaining 95% of apparition sightings, which either do not occur under severe stress, or are not recognized by the observer as being due to his or her imagination.

(12) "Dissociative mechanisms," an appeal to a type of severe mental disorder, an explanation useless for explaining apparition sightings by ordinary healthy people who do not have split personalities or dissociative mental disorders.

Klemperer has used one of the main strategies of people trying to explain the paranormal: attempt a kind of "smorgasbord" or "everything-but-the-kitchen-sink" approach in which you drag out a dozen little explanations. When this is done, typically none of the explanations is a good one. But there's a chance the reader may be impressed, given so many things offered. What's going on is similar to when someone tries to explain the sightings of large UFOs in the sky by saying "it must have been dust in your eye or Venus or a meteor or a jet or a drone or a satellite launch or swamp gas or a Chinese lantern or some hallucination or a camera malfunction."

Pemberton's article seems like a featherweight bit of fluff compared to the "deep dive" article on spiritually transformative experiences (STE) published earlier this year by Robert Davis PhD. But the article by Davis has its own severe problems. One is the attempt to lump together very diverse experiences (some produced by drugs, and others such as NDE and OBE and UFO sightings not produced by drugs) under a too-broad umbrella of "spiritually transformative experiences." We may wonder whether what is going on is another case of trying to shame and stigmatize people who report out-of-body experiences or near-death experiences or UFO sightings by lumping them together with users of illegal psychedelics. Davis seems to have the goal of pathologizing the millions who have such experiences, because he repeatedly talks of aspects of their experiences as "symptoms," and his article has a large-font boldface statement suggesting that spiritually transformative experiences are things that "psychiatrists and psychologists" need to "diagnose and treat."

Referring to all the cases of people reporting seeing or telepathically communicating with anomalous or mysterious entities, Davis unwisely tells us that "entity encounters cannot be dismissed as non-sensical hallucinations without meaning nor accepted as true alternate and transcendent realities," making it rather clear that he seems to prefer a "meaningful hallucination" explanation. He provides nothing of substance to back up such a speculation, and he follows it only with empty or preposterous suggestions as to why so many would be seeing entities that are not there. First he claims that we are "wired to detect sentient others...a predisposition that would have a significant survival value in hostile environments (Winkelman & James, 2018, p. 14)." No, if people were in danger in the wild it would not have any survival value for people to see ghosts or extraterrestrials or a Being of light or any other beings that were not there. On the basis of a vague weak-sounding insinuation that some brain regions have merely been "potentially associated with spiritual development and behavior," Davis asks us to choose between believing that spiritually transformative experiences are "a normal part of the physical evolutionary experience, or an innate physiological coping mechanism to manage times of crisis to help maintain the survival of humanity." Both of these alternatives are preposterous. People don't see deceased relatives during near-death experiences as any part of a "physical evolutionary experience," and individual human beings have neither physical evolutionary experiences nor mental evolutionary experiences (unless you want to stretch "evolutionary" far beyond any "natural selection" meaning). And it is extremely ridiculous to suggest that people see deceased relatives or a "Being of light" or what may look like extraterrestrials to "help maintain the survival of humanity."

The article by Davis clearly involved much more work than the article by Pemberton. But from the standpoint of explaining the paranormal Davis seems just as empty-handed as Pemberton, and neither offer any credible explanations of substance.

Psychiatrists have long acted partially as kind of social conformity policemen, acting to make sure that people act according to the prevailing norms and conventions of some society. Before 1970 psychiatrists acted as part of the enforcement of heterosexuality, acting to stigmatize and marginalize homosexuals by branding them as mentally ill. In the Soviet Union psychiatrists were a key part of the suppression of dissidents, and under that regime many a political dissident was put in a psychiatric institution after being wrongly classified with "sluggish schizophrenia" mostly because of statements denouncing the lack of freedom in the Soviet Union. When those with psychic experiences very widespread

among healthy people are branded as having hallucinations, what is going on seems like a similar attempt of stigmatizing phenomena not approved by our ruling class of authorities, based on arbitrary, dubious or socially constructed ideas of what proper people should or should not report seeing, thinking or doing. When psychiatrists tell people that meaningful apparition-sighting experiences they have are hallucinations, the very real therapeutic value of such experiences is trashed, and the potential help is senselessly replaced with potential harm, as witnesses are stigmatized and shamed.

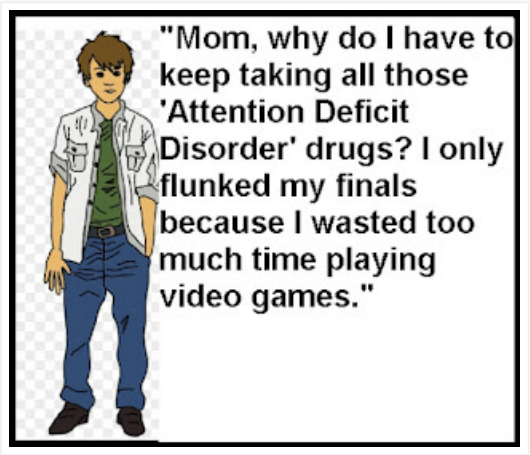
The paper "Psychiatry and Fads: Why Is This Field Different From All Other Fields?" by psychiatry professor Edward Shorter tells us this:

"Gripped in the turbulence of changing paradigms, psychiatry has taken a couple of colossally wrong turns over the years. The whole DSM concept and the ditching of effective but out-of-patent drug classes in favour of blockbusters would be 2 good examples...However, fads as well seem to drive much of psychiatry...In psychiatry, the basic problem is that, from the early 20th century to the present, the field has lurched back and forth among paradigms in a way that has happened in no other discipline. Each lurch has sprayed off its own accumulation of fads and bad ideas."

In the recent Counterpunch.org article "Once Radical Critiques of Psychiatry are Now Mainstream, So What Remains Taboo?" by Bruce E. Levine we have a very broad and slashing critique of today's psychiatry, one that is well worth reading. The article laments what it calls psychiatry's "poor treatment outcomes." A very serious question that must be asked is: are many psychiatrists doing more harm than good? No doubt very many are helped by psychiatrists. But many think that harmful side effects of medications prescribed by psychiatrists are being swept under the rug or insufficiently studied, and that for very many people who did not need to see psychiatrists, long-term psychiatric treatment can often do more harm than good. The very long document here (written by an MD) gives very many specific complaints along these lines. Some think that psychiatrists have entanglements with the pharmaceutical industry which constitute financial conflicts of interest that cloud their judgment in evaluating the pros and cons of the pills psychiatrists so heavily prescribe. Others think that incalculable harm is done when psychiatrists label people with diagnostic categories that are often arbitrary social constructs of a psychiatrist belief community or some too-powerful committee, perhaps unnecessarily causing people to think for the rest of

their lives that are sick or sub-standard. The weak theoretical basis of psychiatric assumptions is discussed here and here.

Whenever a psychiatrist attempts to gaslight people by branding as hallucinations mental experiences that large fractions of the population have, experiences psychiatrists cannot credibly explain, then we seem to be in the very dark and harmful territory of "mass pathologization," in which psychiatrists speak in a way that tends to make very many who are not mentally ill feel or think that they suffer from some mental problem or brain glitch. Whenever we read a psychiatrist who may be improperly causing very many healthy people to think that they have some mental problem they do not actually have, some "glitch in the brain" they do not actually have, we should ask such a psychiatrist: is your overall activity recently doing more to harm people than to help people? We should also ask: how much better results would psychiatrists get if they were to treat people as souls in crisis rather than malfunctioning brains?


"Mom, why do I have to keep taking all those 'Attention Deficit Disorder' drugs? I only flunked my finals because I wasted too much time playing video games."

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:21 AM No comments:

Labels: apparition, paranormal phenomena, psychiatry

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Sunday, July 23, 2023

More Reports of Paranormal Abilities of Chinese Children:

In my 2020 post "EHF: Reports of Chinese Kids With Paranormal Powers," I discussed many reports of paranormal phenomena involving children in China. Let me now discuss some additional reports I have since discovered, also involving children in China.

In the 1983 book *Parapsychology and Self Deception in Science* edited by R.A. McConnell, we have a Chapter 2 entitled "Some Demonstrations of Extraocular Image in China" by C. K. Jen. C. K. Jen had very distinguished credentials, having received a PhD in physics from Harvard, before serving for years as a physics professor in China, and then serving many years as a university science researcher in the United States, eventually being appointed in 1967 as a Professor of Chemical Physics at Johns Hopkins University.

The observations reported by C. K. Jen (dating from the early 1980's) are very noteworthy. Jen reports an example of a type of phenomenon that has been widely reported, a phenomenon known as transposition of the senses. Transposition of the senses is when some person seems to have sensory capabilities associated with some part of the body normally not associated with such capabilities. For example, a person reporting transposition of the senses may report being able to read with his fingertips while blindfolded. Or he may report being able to see (when blindfolded) some object that is placed on the middle of his stomach. Or he may report being able to see the characteristics of an object when the object is placed near his ear. Reports such as these appear again and again in the literature of parapsychology. By using the link here (and continuing to press the Older Posts button at the bottom right),

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Scientist Flubs and Flops #8

SETI Scientist Misspoke Sagan-Style

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you can read seven previous posts I wrote that discussed evidence for transposition of the senses.

C. K. Jen reports what he calls "extraocular image," involving people getting images from something other than use of their eyes. He states, "In late 1980 and early 1981 when we were there [in China], both the interest and activity in extraocular image had already grown to large proportions on a nationwide scale." Jen reports on page 10 that he was surprised to see that a nine-year-old Chinese boy could apparently identify words hidden from his sight that had been written on well-folded or crumpled paper.

On page 11 Jen reports an experiment or demonstration at the University of Science and Technology on November 30, 1980. We read this report of a test of four "demonstrators" consisting of three young girls and one young boy, between age 9 and 11:

"Mr. Jia had his aides prepare over one hundred samples, each consisting of a piece of paper, on which either a Chinese word or an English letter was written in color (red, blue or black). Each sample was folded many times into a small pad, either sealed at the folding edge with a touch of glue or completely sealed. In any case, the writing inside each sample was not visible to the eye....Mr. Jia asked me to be the chief referee, with my wife and one friend as assistant referees, all sitting in the front row directly facing the demonstraters. We saw an usher carrying a big place of randomly placed samples up to the demonstrators and let each of them take a sample at will. Each demonstrator put the picked sample between his or her palms. In less than a minute or two the three girls indicated that they already got their answers. Mr. Jia announced to them each of the should write on the sample envelope the word and its color they 'saw.' These unopened samples were handed over to me and I then let them be opened one-by-one in front of us (three referees) and have the contents be compared between the inside and the outside."

Jen reports that three of the four answered correctly, naming the right word, with only one failing. On a second round under the same conditions, the same three children correctly named each of the concealed words. In addition, several novice volunteers added to the round's participants gave answers that were mostly limited (such as naming a first letter), but which were all correct, with one of the novices correctly naming the word. Interviewing the three children who seemed to be so successful, Jen was told by them that after holding the wrapped up paper for a minute or so, an image of the answer appeared in their "mind's eye."

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On pages 13-14 Jen reports of tests of a ten-year-old student named Yu Po. Twice Jen's wife prepared a sealed wax ball or container with a word hidden inside it. Within about 30 seconds Yu Po correctly named the letter. The third time a colleague of Jen prepared a wax ball with a word hidden inside. Yu Po quickly named the word correctly.

On pages 14-15, after reviewing various far-fetched possibilities involving fraud, and after considering the very young ages of the children apparently displaying such skills, Jen says this:

"Having gone over all the imagined possibilities of fraud on a specific EOI [extraocular image or ESP] demonstration we witnessed, we found none of the suspicions well founded. ***I am left with no better alternative than to assume the observed phenomena were indeed real.*** *In a broad sense, I have no reason at all to suppose any of the three demonstrations we eye-witnessed was in any way fraudulent. In the same vein, we heard that virtually hundreds of demonstrations or experiments on EOI [extraocular image or ESP] involving young children have been conducted all over China during the past two years and, in general, the results were about the same as ours. If most, if not all, of these acts are fraudulent, then one would have to assume that multitudes of Chinese people are freely joined in a widespread act of conspiracy and deception. Such an assumption would be utterly unthinkable."*

Jen made such a conclusion apparently with no knowledge of previous reports of this type in other lands. A thorough study of parapsychology would have revealed countless cases of very similar successes stretching back nearly two centuries, such as the countless public exhibitions in which Alexis Didier or Adolphe Didier displayed similar successes in clairvoyance (as discussed here, here and here). (For an interesting discussion of Alexis Didier read pages 234-238 of Jeffrey Kripal's *Authors of the Impossible*, in which he discusses a 500-page 2003 work by Meheust exhaustively documenting the evidence for Didier's clairvoyance.) The abilities described in Jen's paper were very similar to other reports I mention below, which come from various countries during the past two centuries.

In a postscript to Jen's paper, McConnell states that "in August 1980, Dr. Lee C. Teng of the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory at Batavia, Illinois, made a lecture stop at the Institute for Modern Physics" in China, and that he and his son "were invited by his hosts to participate in an ESP experiment with the 12-year-old son of an Institute librarian." The boy successfully identified a word written in a folded up piece of paper inserted in his ear, and "successfully reproduced

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

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- Biological Orthodoxy Flunks the Software Test
- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

both Chinese characters and physics terminology in English, although he could speak no English." Reading this account in a letter to a parapsychology journal, McConnell phoned Teng and confirmed that Teng was its author.

In a CIA archive there was an undated British newspaper report which can be read here. Matching the reports given above, we read, "The Chinese say that more than 80 children and one adult have shown this power in tests by reading messages folded and concealed in containers of various materials." For example, we are told that nine-year-old Jiang Yan "correctly described a drawing on a piece of paper which had been folded and inserted into a glove which was then wrapped around her wrist." We are also told that 11-year-old Zheng Hong "could read words on a paper slipped under his foot."

In another document in a CIA archive, dating from about 1979, American physicist H. E. Puthoff states this:

"Recent widespread interest was triggered by a report in the March 11, 1979 Sichuan Daily. In that report it was claimed that a young boy, 12-year-old Tang Ye, was able to read written material placed in physical contact with his ears...In May, 1970, reports began to surface from all over China that children elsewhere were duplicating this feat."

Later in the same document we read this:

"A 12-year-old boy, Tang Yu, in Dazu County, Sichuan Province, had been discovered to be able to 'recognize the characters (Chinese ideograms) with his ears...Subsequently, more than ten teenagers who also had had this kind of function were discovered one after another."

A bit later in the document we read a list of stringent test conditions, and then read this:

"Under these experimental conditions, some subjects whose functions were stronger were tested with dozens of specimens. The rate of absolutely correct identification was more than 80 percent, which indicated that one of the special inductive functions, the so called 'recognizing characters with the ears,' existed objectively. Scientists in Beijing University further found in experiments that among over 70 children, approximately 10 old, there was a considerable proportion of subjects who had the special inductive function of 'recognizing characters with the ears.' "

The researcher Si-Chen Lee long studied Taiwanese children who might have an ability to read with their fingers, and he reported very substantial success. He reports this:

- A "Water Memory" Effect I Have Often Photographed
- 25 Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death
- Why the Origin of Language Is Inexplicable Under Orthodox Assumptions
- Visualizing a Top-Down Theory of Mind and Cosmic Connectivity
- Disastrous Blunders of the Experts
- Cosmic Coincidence Cover-up
- The Gigantic Missing Link of Biological Life
- Cosmic Fine-Tuning Visualized
- Why Machines Will Not Soon Be as Intelligent as Men
- Cloud Computing and the Concept of Non-local Consciousness
- There Is No Plausible Explanation For How Brains Can Store Very Long-Term Memory
- The Top 6 Problems With Using a Multiverse to Explain Cosmic Fitness
- "Vacuum Catastrophe" Should Be Called the Vacuum Miracle
- Why the Origin of Humans Is an Unsolved Mystery
- The Best Basis for Believing in an Afterlife Is Something Other Than Paranormal Phenomena
- Still More Dreams or Visions That Seemed to Foretell a Death
- The Evidence for Out-of-Body Experiences
- GOAL and Soul: Postulating What We Need to Explain Humans
- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

"Some people are able to read images by using their fingers rather than their eyes. After nine years of investigation, we confirmed that children between 6 and 13 years old can be trained in finger-reading. An earlier report suggested that finger reading can be developed in a high percent of children (~40%) with training (S. L. Chen et al 1989). More than 21% of the children in our studies developed statistically significant finger-reading capability ($p < 0.05$) after attending finger-reading training classes for two hours daily over four days."

We read of this technique to test children:

"*During each finger-reading trial, children placed a hand in a cloth sleeve, as shown in Figure 1. These are standard, light-proof sleeves that are used to handle photographic negatives. The children had the two cuffs tightly tied around their forearms. The samples were randomly chosen by the experimenter, clenched in his fist, and put into the bag through the zipper on the other side. Since all of the two-digit numbers were printed by laser printer, there were no palpable depressions on either side of the paper."*

Children and the cloth sleeves used for the tests

Lee reports that of 27 children test in the year 2000, 5 were able to score at a high statistical significance of $p < .001$, and that of 37 children tested in the year 2001, 6 were able to score at high statistical significance of $p < .001$. On page 17 of the document here, Lee reports an interesting effect in which children reported highly unusual "mind's eye" activity when touching unseen pieces of paper with religious meaning.

Below are similar accounts from outside of China. On page 170 the book P*sychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain* by Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder has a chapter on the topic of "Eyeless Sight." We read of Rosa Kuleshova, who developed an ability to read or detect colors while blindfolded, merely by touching reading material or objects with her hands. Kuleshova held up very well to a long series of scientific tests. The same phenomenon was reported decades earlier in France, by Jules

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
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- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

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Romains in his book *Eyeless Sight* (discussed here). A 19th-century work states this: "Although blind, this girl can read by passing her fingers over the printed or written page, and can describe persons whose pictures were handed to her."

An edition of the EdgeScience magazine (#47) published by the Society for Scientific Exploration has an article "Seeing Without Eyes" (page 9) which discusses evidence for clairvoyance like that gathered by Romains. It mentions work by Carol Ann Liaros in the 1970's, saying, "Liaros discovered that blind people could see the images on black-and-white photos (and could see the photos when they were turned over, face-down, and even their reallife colors)." We read about many other examples of ESP and clairvoyance similar to that reported by Romains, most occurring in recent decades.

A long article in the June 12, 1964 Life magazine was entitled "Seeing Color With the Fingers." It reported a great number of observations very similar to those reported by Romains. You can read the article here, by scrolling down to page 102. In 1964 Life magazine was as mainstream and respectable as the New York Times, and had been a trusted mainstream source for decades. Just as there is now a gigantic New York Times building in New York City, an equal-sized skyscraper was once called the Time-Life building.

In the Life magazine article of June 12, 1964, we read a very long account of Rosa Kuleshova's paranormal ability and how it was demonstrated in a long series of tests with different Soviet scientists. Below is an excerpt:

"Rosa, securely blindfolded, could read headlines in newspaper and magazines, and the large type in children's books, just as rapidly as if her eyes were open. She could read ordinary newspaper type, too - more slowly, but still correctly. She was able to describe illustrations in popular publications like Ogonyok and Krokodil as well as on cigaret packages and postage stamps. And she had no trouble at all singling out black, white, red, orange, yellow, blue and green samples of colored papers, colored pencils, aniline dyes, as well as cotton threads and fabrics."

The phenomenon has sometimes been called dermo-optical perception. The 19th-century literature on hypnosis contains many similar accounts of such an ability occurring during hypnosis. The term "transposition of the senses" was often used to describe the ability. A nineteenth century work by William Gregory (a chemistry professor at the very prestigious University of Edinburgh) describes this phenomenon on page 148:

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Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

"I have not hitherto noticed, save in passing, a phenomenon which occasionally presents itself, but which is not by any means uniformly present in a marked form; I mean, transference of the senses to some special part of the body.... But it sometimes happens, that the power of seeing, not the ordinary sense of sight, but the clairvoyant power, is located in some special part. It has been observed to be located in the pit of the stomach, in the tips of the fingers, in the occiput as well as in the forehead, or on the top of the head, and in one case which I heard of from a scientific gentleman who tested it, in the soles of the feet. The books and journals which treat of Animal Magnetism teem with similar facts; and the head, hand, and epigastrium, seem to be the usually selected parts, probably from the proximity to the brain in the first, the great development of the nerves of touch in the second, and the presence of the great sympathetic plexus of nerves in the third. The fact itself is beyond all doubt, and it is quite unnecessary to accumulate cases. In one form or other, the power of dispensing with the eyes, and yet perceiving color, &c. quite plainly, is found in every good subject. The same thing frequently happens with hearing. Thus E. when on her travelling state or stage, is utterly deaf to all sounds, save those which are addressed to her by speaking with the mouth in contact with the tips of her fingers. This fact I have myself verified. I believe she would not hear a pistol fired at her ear, in that state."

On the page here an author quotes a press report of him separating while blindfolded face-down cards held by someone else into two packs, one with only black cards (clubs and spades) and the other pack with only red cards (diamonds and hearts). The author then goes on to a long description of far more remarkable feats performed at a public exhibition by an Eastern mystic.

A paper in the April 1991 Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research discusses parapsychology research in China between 1979 and 1989, and discusses three periods: a period between 1979 and 1982 of excited interest in paranormal abilities; a period in the years after 1982 of dampened activity caused by a May 1982 Communist party ruling discouraging research into paranormal abilities; then renewed research activity between 1987 and 1989, with much of the research taking place under an umbrella of qigong research that involves studying a mysterious bodily energy source that might be applicable to health.

A long paper "The Rise and Fall of Qigong" picks up the narrative into the 1990's. We hear of years of qigong research in

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- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

China around 1988 that seemed to include very many reports of dramatic paranormal activity in China, with the research being presented as part of way of thinking claimed to be consistent with the ruling party's ideology. According to the paper there then arose in China in the early 1990's a Falun Gong movement which had a more religious approach, one that was very interested in qigong, but less interested in scientific parapsychology. After the Falun Gong movement gained a very massive following in China, the Chinese government started to discourage it and eventually tried to suppress it beginning around 1999. This may have resulted in a downturn in study of parapsychology in China. It seems that documenting the paranormal within China has been rather an on/off affair, with activity levels largely dependent on approval signals from the government, which have varied from year to year. In the paper the "fall of qigong" is depicted as a kind of political and social affair, rather than anyone disproving claims about qigong.

Despite such ups and downs, it seems that parapsychology research involving children is still occurring in China. In the paper "21 Century Some Real Testable Phenomena of Parapsychology in China," Yi-Fang Chang of the Department of Physics, Yunnan University, Kunming, China discusses some noteworthy research, stating this:

"In the summers of 2012 to 2017, we trained the potential of fifty-two blind children in Kunming. We mainly combine traditional Chinese culture and adopt the method of guiding blind children into a quiet and focused state, then these trained blind children have some effect. ***A blind child X-N Jin of these children is particularly prominent. He can not only accurately recognize the dozens of poker points and colors in a kraft paper envelope,*** *and* ***identify all cards, but also accurately identify single-sided graphics, even double-sided multi-color graphics.*** *S****ometimes he can conduct successful PK [psychokinesis].****"*

In the paper we read this:

"*In 1982, the China Somatic Science Society (CSSS), an organization Zhang Zhenhuan had founded to study extraordinary powers, invited a charismatic qigong healer named Zhang Baosheng (1960-2018) to Beijing. Zhang Baosheng was one of the first healers to propose the idea of a 'cosmic field'—a network of energy in which participation (usually through qigong practice) brought about extraordinary powers or even miracles. Zhang Zhenhuan had Zhang*

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

Baosheng demonstrate his extraordinary powers to the group, which included passing cigarettes through solid objects and making objects disappear. The CSSS also confirmed his extraordinary power through experiments. Yet neither side stopped there. In fact, Zhang Baosheng actually travelled into the Zhongnanhai compound, where all the top Party officials lived, and healed the Party members themselves."

One of the authors of a paper makes this startling report of observing Zhang Baosheng (1960-2018):

"In his early personal experience with Zhang Baosheng, gained over months of close observation, the senior author found that, as with other major psychics under loose control, Zhang was able to perform numerous incredible feats. Most of these involved apparent PK [psychokinesis], and many were done in the way the senior author or others requested, with the targets seemingly chosen at random. For example, Zhang caused objects, such as someone's photo identification card or personal name stamp, to move to another room which Zhang had not entered, or caused a torn personal letter to be restored to a single piece."

An article in the Psi Encylopedia says this about Zhang Baosheng:

"Beginning in the mid 1970s, Zhang Baosheng began demonstrating ostensibly paranormal abilities such as movement of objects and telepathy. In 1982, a local group of scientists brought him to the attention of Beijing scientists at the Institute of Space-Medico Engineering (ISME) where he was heavily investigated: Zhang's main experiment involved moving small objects in and out of glass tubes. In one well-controlled demonstration, specially marked pieces of paper were treated with a chemical and placed inside a tube. The tube was melted in order to constrict it midway. Cotton buds were placed in the top half having been soaked in a chemical that reacts with the chemical on the treated paper. After five minutes of close scrutiny by four investigators, the paper was found to be lying outside the tube, which nevertheless remained intact. There was evidence of a chemical reaction on the cotton buds, suggesting that the papers had passed through the cotton. In other experiments, Zhang psychokinetically extracted live insects out of the tubes, and on one occasion, a pill was filmed exiting the tube."

In a 2007 paper a Russian scientist reports quite a few specific details about observations of similar abilities in the famed mind-

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

over-matter wonder Ninel Kulagina (the same as Nina Kulagina).

Postscript: An article in Edge Science discusses evidence for anomalous qigong energy effects.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:15 AM No comments:

Labels: ESP, mind over matter, paranormal phenomena, psychokinesis, qigong

Saturday, June 10, 2023

Naked Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 4 of 4)

Mysterious orbs mainly show up in photographs, as if they were fleeting manifestations appearing too quickly to be seen with the naked eye. Orbs of many colors have showed up countless times in my photos, which have produced almost 1500 mysterious blue orbs, and more than 800 mysterious striped orbs. But in many cases people will report seeing a mysterious orb with the naked eye. I quoted many such accounts in Part 1 of this series and in Part 2 of this series and Part 3 of this series.

In the book *Opening Minds* by Simeon Hein PhD, we read the following on page 124:

*"Strange things began to happen in my bedroom at night. One time **I woke up to see this blue, semi-solid ball of light** moving around my room. I closed my eyes, thinking I was making it up. Opening my eyes again, I still saw the ball up towards the ceiling. After a few seconds, it vanished."*

On page 147-149 the author talks about balls of light supposedly seen or photographed near crop circles. On page 149 he states the following about crop circle formations:

"While the balls of light may be dismissed by some as unknown electromagnetic phenomena, they often appear to possess some innate intelligence in their movements. In several of the known sightings of these objects, they appear to move deliberately in and out of nearby formations. Whether the balls of light are guided probes or living organisms of some sort remains to be seen."

On page 156 of the book, we read the following:

"The luminous objects seen near crop formations appear to be intelligently controlled. In the case of Steve Alexander's ball of light, it appeared to explore one formation and then skipped to another nearby. It then caused a tractor to stall for

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

approximately thirty seconds as it passed overhead. The tractor driver said ***it looked like a glowing beach ball****. In the Barbury '99 formation, the object made an abrupt turn right over the formation and then sped off. In another instance, a group of German tourists witnessed* ***a ball of light make five passes over and through a crop formation****. In several cases, some on video tape, military helicopters are seen to approach balls of light over crop formations and attempt to chase them away. In one instance related to me by Colin Andrews,* ***the balls of light appeared to do a dance around two military helicopters*** *before speeding off. "*

Anyone scoffing at such an idea should be reminded of the similar sightings of mysterious lights often reported by World War II pilots, who gave them the name "foo fighters," even though they looked nothing like planes. A recent Daily Mail article refers to the All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO), an office within the United States Office of the Secretary of Defense. The article says, "According to AARO's statistics of UFO reports between 1996 and 2023, only 1% are polygons (like an octagon), 2% disk-shaped, **while 52% are orbs or spherical**."

Reports of the appearance of a phantom called Bien Boa are some of the strangest stories in the literature of the paranormal. One such account by Professor Charles Richet can be read beginning on page 269 of Volume 2 of the Annals of Psychical Research. On page 179 of Volume 3 of the Annals of Psychical Research, we read this about this Bien Boa:

"This witness had also been present at the building-up of B. B. outside the cabinet ***in the form of a whirling white ball, from which there presently proceeded first the head and then the whole body*** *; he has also heard B. B. speak and give moral advice."*

A similar account appears on page 416 of the same volume, which talks about a white ball that "in less than two minutes transformed itself into a materialised spirit." (The page numbers I just gave refer to the page numbers appearing in the volume, rather than the PDF file page numbers.)

The folowing account is from page 68 of the book *Extraterrestrial Contact* by Kathleen Marden. The "me" in the narrative is Kathleen, and the "Jim" in the account is someone diagnosed with cancerous lymphoma, which involved greatly enlarged lymph nodes on the left side of his neck.

"Jim had been photographing lighted orbs that he'd seen floating in his home, but prior to his surgery, he mailed an

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

astounding video to me. It showed a beautiful white orb surrounded by a light blue halo .... It flew like a butterfly, morphing as it crossed his bedroom and hovered over his body, shooting rainbow light beams downward. It then dove into his body. The following day, the nodes on Jim's neck had significantly decreased in size. On the day of his surgery, four small necrotic nodes were removed. No cancer was noted. It seems like a miracle!"

On page 135 Kathleen reports seeing an orb moving around her son's bedroom dramatically, and says, "The orb appeared to have intelligence." On page 136 we read that "**more than 60 percent of the survey takers who participated in MUFON's Experiencer Survery have observed lighted orbs in their homes**."

The link here shows only reports of UFOs made to one reporting agency (the National UFO Reporting Center), and only reports of sphere-like UFOs. We see more than 60 reports of sphere-like UFOs sighted during the first five months of 2023, in different parts of the US, with most of the reports mentioning a duration of more than a minute. Overall the National UFO Reporting Center has more than 7000 reports of UFOs classified as "spheres," which is more than the number of reports they have of UFOs classified as disks.

In 2019 the New York Times published a report on UFOs. The report begins like this:

"The strange objects, one of them like a spinning top moving against the wind, appeared almost daily from the summer of 2014 to March 2015, high in the skies over the East Coast. Navy pilots reported to their superiors that the objects had no visible engine or infrared exhaust plumes, but that they could reach 30,000 feet and hypersonic speeds. 'These things would be out there all day,' said Lt. Ryan Graves, an F/A-18 Super Hornet pilot."

Later we have an account of a pilot seeing a mysterious orb flying between two Navy jets that were only about 100 feet apart from each other:

"The pilot and his wingman were flying in tandem about 100 feet apart over the Atlantic east of Virginia Beach when something flew between them, right past the cockpit. It looked to the pilot, Lieutenant Graves said, like a sphere encasing a cube."

A sphere encasing a cube? That kind of "rings a bell" with me,

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

as I did once get a square shape in an orb, as shown below (a photo from this 2018 post):

There are some remarkable accounts at the sites https://www.oberf.org and https://www.adcrf.org. For example, in this account a man reports having a cardiac arrest that put him in a coma for several days. He says, "The bass player and the singer both agreed, though, that at the time of my collapse, they saw my spirit rise up out of my body." Similarly, this account states, "I was shocked to see a mist leave from his head, which instantly turned into an exact duplicate of his body," and in this account a man says his wife "witnessed a mist-like substance leaving the head of a patient who died." Similarly, in this account someone states, "Momma said she actually saw a thin white mist rise above the bed" when someone died in her arms.

In this remarkable account, a woman reports seeing and feeling an orb at the time of her grandmother's death:

"I was on a camping trip, down by the Columbia River. I was asleep, and was awoken, around 5 in the morning. I was on my back, looking straight up at the ceiling and noticed I couldn't move. But, I wasn't scared at all. Suddenly, ***a bright orb of light came down, through the ceiling and flew into my chest****. My vision was filled with the brightest, whitest light I have ever seen, but it didn't bother me.* ***As soon as the orb entered my chest, I knew it was my grandmother Cecilia,*** *she was speaking to me, inside my mind. She came to tell me goodbye, and to tell me everything was going to be all right, and she loved me. Then she shot back out of my chest, and back up through the ceiling, and I could move again. I woke my boyfriend up, and told him, my Grandma just died. And he laughed and said, no, go back to sleep it was just a dream. Later that morning about, around 8 in the morning, my brother in law, came and found where we were camping, and told me my grandma had died early that morning, and I said yeah I already knew."*

A quite similar story is told in this account of a woman's

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

experience the month after her mother died:

*"One night in October, I had just gotten in bed when **I saw a ball of softly glowing mist slowly descend upon my bed from the corner of the ceiling.** I was speechless as I saw it slowing coming towards me. **Somehow I knew it was my mother**, even though I couldn't discern a body or a shape. The mist enveloped me as I lay in bed and filled me with feelings of love and calm. I had the presence of mind not to move or open my eyes, because somehow I knew that it would spoil the moment. I just forced myself to remain calm and focus on every moment so that I could remember the experience.*

*"My mother communicated telepathically with me by repeating my name over and over, saying, 'Eve, Eve, Eve, I love you so much. I love you so much. Don't worry about me. Where I am, there's complete freedom, freedom, freedom! Tell your brothers and sisters I love them and I will always be with you all.' **The mist slowly gathered itself in a ball**, once again, and slowly ascended to the ceiling, then it was gone. I immediately opened my eyes and had this incredulous feeling when I realized that I had just been visited by my mother!"*

We have four similarities between this account and the previous account mentioning a grandmother Cecilia:

(1) In both accounts an orb or ball is seen by a woman, with the orb or ball coming from the ceiling.
(2) In both accounts the orb or ball touches a woman's body, either enveloping it or seeming to enter into it.
(3) In both accounts there there then follows what seems like a telepathic communication between the woman and her mother or grandmother, with a message of love.
(4) In both accounts the orb or ball is seen to exit from the ceiling.

The report of the orb appearing from the "corner of the ceiling" is interesting to me, as the first orb photo I ever took (years ago) showed an orb in the corner of the ceiling.

Speaking of spooky round shapes appearing at the corners of ceilings, here is another account of such a thing, made by a woman describing her father's death, and comparing what she saw to a corporate logo that is kind of a blurry ring shape:

*"I had turned to my right and as I turned back around my eyes glanced up toward the corner of the ceiling on my right and I saw **a circle of mist hovering in the corner**. The only*

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

way I can describe the circle is that it looks exactly like the Lucent Technologies circle on their sign, like a wide circle with kind of a tail escaping the circle but it wasn't red it was a hazy mist/fog. I have reviewed this in my mind a thousand times since his death and I think my dad's spirit had already left his body."

The link here takes you to a rather interesting Ancient Aliens episode you can watch on www.youtube.com. At about the 38:15 mark, we hear someone referring to a strange very old site, and saying that at the place there have been "many, many sightings of orbs and lights that have been seen hovering around."

The Washington Post said this about flying orbs: "In some cases, **pilots—many of whom are engineers and academy graduates—claimed to observe small spherical objects flying in formation.**" This is probably a reference to sightings in recent years. It is known that quite a few World War II pilots reported mysterious balls of light near their planes. They were called "foo fighters." A web page says, "Toward the end of World War II pilots began reporting seeing UFOs - Unidentified Flying Objects - in the shape of strange glowing balls flying around their aircraft at night."

A news report mention a man in Pennsylvania who saw bright orbs. He recalls the following:

*"This extremely bright orb appeared. I thought it was a life flight helicopter. It didn't move. Then **two other orbs appeared,** and they were in a perfect alignment with each other (straight up and down). They started to move as if they were attached to each other. Then another identical line of orbs, three in each line, a total of four lines evenly spaced."*

He also reported this:

"It was like they were all connected. The spacing between each orb and each line was evenly spaced. The middle orb would just disappear then in a blink of an eye they would be there."

It is interesting that this witness reported the orbs moving towards Kecksburg, Pennsylvania -- the site of a famous UFO incident that occurred long ago.

The document here is a long collection of reports of people who reported seeing something paranormal. Mixed within the reports are occasional reports of people seeing mysterious orbs

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

with their own eyes, or photographing orbs with an image inside them. Below are some of the interesting reports.

Page 65: 'I have often seen lights orbs and mists while watching TV or listening to music.'
Page 69: **"**The second kind were like orbs of light darting around, you could see light bursting from their bodies. "
Page 113: **"**Once back home, I zoomed in on my orb photos taken during that last evening, and found upon enlargement, in one of them, there was an unmistakable being with wings."
Page 114: "It was dark outside and I pressed halfway down on my camera and through the viewfinder, there were about three large blue orbs right by the window pane, as if they were looking in on us from the outside!"
Page 115: "I have managed to see little blue lights or orbs around my flat from time to time."
Page 115: "The third fairy, which also appeared in an orb, was blue and had a cherubic face. "
Page 115: "In another photo of an orb, a blue one, when enlarged, I could make out a beatific little childlike face, which had a garland of flowers round its neck."
Page 115: "Though it appeared in an orb, I had the impression (perhaps this was communicated to me telepathically) that this being's real size was much taller than I am."
Page 116: "The blue orbs appeared when I was playing with my cat Fig."
Page 138: "When involved in healing work have observed small winged creatures inside different colored orbs of light around subject."
Page 201: "I have seen a lot of things in my life, like ghosts, orbs, UFOs but have never seen a mythical creature like the beloved fairy."
Page 223: **"**What they were seeing were lights, like glowing orbs the size of a fist."
Page 270: **"**Other things happened in that cabin on the water that were what you might call supernatural, but nothing like the glowing orb ever appeared to any human person ever again."
Page 294: **"**"I have taken photos of spirit orbs and Earth bound souls for over a year now. I am gifted to be able to cross souls to the light therefore my love and light are very strong and I attract a lot of spirits and angels to me as you can imagine."
Page 304: "Then a florescent purple orb about the size of a small basket ball came into the room and landed next to me on the bed. We exchanged a mental greeting to each other and I thanked it for showing itself to me. Then it streaked out of the room disappearing through the ceiling."
Page 314: "Going back to camp my friend saw a floating orb light, it looked like a lantern floating through the air. We

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

camped in these woods several nights and saw the orb lights twice more. ”
Page 314: “I turned to see what was making the sound and an ORB about two and a half inches in circumference flew over my shoulder and in front of me. I was in awe. It was golden green with a tinge of blue and it left a trail of glittering gold with a tinge of green ‘dust’ behind it. Even after the orb disappeared the glittering dust remained until it slowly faded. It was the most beautiful thing, that I had ever seen. ”
Page 318: “Faerie orbs fly around the house and gardens.”

On page 179 of her fascinating book *Phenomena: The Secret History of the US Government's Investigations Into Extrasensory Perception and Psychokinesis*, journalist Annie Jacobsen recounts an amazing incident. She says that according to Kit Green --a "contract monitor for the CIA" -- while psychic Uri Geller was being tested by scientists in 1975 -- tests funded by the US government -- some "nuclear weapons engineers had reported seeing things they could not rationally explain." Green says these things were seen:

"Items flying across the room. Lights flashing. ***A six-inch ball of light, rolling down the hallway.*** *One scientist reported seeing a flying orb."*

The interesting "Mysterious Universe" site (www.mysteriousuniverse.org) reported here that there have been many visual reports of mysterious orbs in the skies over the nation of Turkey. The site says the following:

"The photographs generally show a cluster of four or five orbs (although some show up to twice that many) or lights, usually in the shape of a triangle or wedge. The photographs show the orbs in a cluster to be the same size, although one alleged to have been taken on the same night shows a large light orbited by smaller ones."

The following remarkable account regarding orbs comes to us from Jo Mooy:

"Though I’ve seen Orbs in my photographs since 2003; I’ve also seen Orbs without a camera and witnessed them 'powering up' when spoken to. The most remarkable occurrence was two days after the death of my neighbor. The lights in my house began to flicker on and off. When I ventured into the living room I saw two very large Orbs near the ceiling. Realizing Kathy had just passed I asked, 'Is that you, Kathy?' At that moment, one of the Orbs powered up brightly and stayed that

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

way for about ten seconds. Knowing Kathy wanted to be with her mother who had previously passed over, I asked 'Is that your mother with you?' And the second Orb powered up. Eventually, they both faded from view, but not before being documented by two people in the house."

On page 272 of the interesting book *The Supernatural: A New Vision of the Unexplained* by Whitley Strieber and Jeffrey J. Kripal, there is an interesting account by a man named Stuart. Stuart says that when he was in the Big Sur area of California, he once suddenly saw golden orbs emerging from the ground a few feet in front of him. He says they produced a strange effect on him: "They induced in me an overwhelming calm and a peculiar serenity that I hadn't experienced before then, and haven't experienced since." The orbs then disappeared. According to Kripal, "such glowing orbs, it turns out, are fairly well-known in the larger Big Sur community."

On this page of the National UFO Reporting Center, there is a summary of how many reports were made of UFOs, organized by the shape of what was reported. The table tells us that 13,892 of the UFOs had a shape of "circle," that 5363 had a shape of "orb," and that 7482 of the UFOs had a shape of "sphere." It seems that reports of such circular or spherical objects are more common that reports of disks, with only 8497 having a reported shape of "disk."

In the video here Randy Schiefer tells a long and very interesting story of his near-death experience. Orbs appear twice in the account. At the 18 minute mark, Randy tells how after seeing what looked like heavenly wonders, he found himself in a void:

"I was in a void...But there were orbs of light that were passing by."

At the 19:41 mark he says this:

"This orb of light caught my attention...It materialized into a human face."

Randy reports that the face said to tell Madison at the salon that her grandfather was okay; and that this was followed by a sight of someone making American flags and red, white and blue ribbons on a white porch. Randy said he did not recognize the name, but soon met such a Madison at a salon, who said her grandfather used to make flags and red, white and blue ribbons every Memorial Day, and used to love sitting on the white porch of his home.

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

Posted by Mark Mahin at 4:29 AM No comments:

Labels: life after death, orbs, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations

Tuesday, June 6, 2023

Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 3 of 4)

Mysterious orbs mainly show up in photographs, as if they were fleeting manifestations appearing too quickly to be seen with the naked eye. Orbs of many colors have showed up countless times in my photos, which have produced almost 1500 mysterious blue orbs, and more than 800 mysterious striped orbs. But in many cases people will report seeing a mysterious orb with the naked eye. I quoted many such accounts in Part 1 of this series and in Part 2 of this 4-part series. Below are some more.

At the page here you can read each of the prize-winning entries of a 2021 competition by the Bigelow Institute for Consciousness Studies, a competition for the best presentation of evidence regarding life after death. There are some very interesting entries, some quite long. Clicking on the second prize entry by Pim van Lommel MD, and scrolling down to page 33 of the downloaded file, we find an astonishing account. Pim van Lommel relates a personal communication he received from someone regarding a "sphere of light." We read this:

"At the end of 2000 my eldest son died by suicide. From the police report estimating time of death, I learned it was about the same time a curious thing happened to me. I saw a sphere of light enter my window and then enter my forehead whereupon I was suddenly 'awareness without a body', in a place profoundly lit, with a sense of spacious depth but without any features. I felt profound warmth and love, felt my son was ok, and heard the words, 'There is nothing wrong and there has never been anything wrong.' Somehow, I knew this to be true with every cell of my body even though he had been suffering with pain for years. The next day I learned of his death."

I received by email an observational account from a person who reports seeing with her own eyes a red orb moving between her dining room chairs and her window, five different times. In the first episode of a cable series *Aliens in Alaska,* we have an eyewitness account of a couple that saw seven orange orbs in the sky. Their video shows a featureless orange ball. One of the observers reported the sighting to the FAA. In the second episode, we see a picture of an orb-like object in front of a mountain, with someone describing it as a green sphere. On another episode someone repeatedly uses the word "orb" to describe a strange orange circular object he saw in the sky. He

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

reports one orb "chasing" another orb. On another episode another person describes seeing two orange orbs in the sky.

Speaking of green spheres, on pages 89-91 of the book *A Cavalcade of the Supernatural* by Harold H. U. Cross, PhD, we have the following claims, which start by mentioning a circle of witnesses:

"At the Sydney circle, previously mentioned, there were always many manifestation of these wonderful lights, and the writer would describe them as ***balls of dull green fire****, of various dimensions....The author, when on medical duty for the French Government at Tahiti during the terrible epidemic of Spanish influenza, watched at the bedside of a dying missionary and beheld* ***a luminous cloud which enveloped the head and thorax of the patient****. This was visible by candle light, and lasted about two hours; all who were near and the whole night staff saw the phenomenon. The author placed his hand in the cloud, and it became obscured as by a fog....As life departed the cloud gradually disappeared. Death was due to double pneumonia. At a distance from the man's bed, the cloud roughly resembled the conventional 'astral body.' "*

The 1874 book *Dead and Gone* by James Samuel Pollock (which you can read here) is a a book deserving much more attention than the very little attention it has received so far. It is a book filled with accounts of paranormal experiences, such as apparition sightings, dreams that seemed to foretell death, and deathbed visions. In some of the accounts we hear of balls of light. On page 120 we read this:

"*Shortly after, when the room was dark, she saw the light again*. **It appeared as a globe of white light, and gradually formed itself into an angel.** *Both Mr. and Mrs. B- saw this. Next day their baby died."*

On the same page we read another account involving an orb:

"When he inquired of her the cause of her comfort, she said, ' Father, I have seen with my own eyes the things of which I doubted. My soul went forth from the body, and I saw the holy angels, and the souls of the blessed, and the rewards of the just. I saw also my own body, with the eyes of my soul, lying pale and bloodless on the floor of my cell, as it were dried up and without juice.' The abbot asked what appearance the soul had out of the body. She answered, 'The appearance of a ball of fire, like the moon, and able to see on all sides.' She added, however, that when the soul, or an angel, manifests itself to men, it takes the lineaments of a body."

This account matches quite a few accounts of near-death experiences. In such accounts a person will often report floating out of his body, and being able to see in all directions rather than only in a single direction. On page 136 we read this:

*"Miss A. M. K. is the youngest of three sisters, who lived in London in the year 1865. She had gone to rest one night, when **she saw a blue globe of light in her room**. She was greatly excited, and rushed at the light, when it disappeared."*

On page 159 we read this:

*"The man of God, Godric, saw, while he was praying, an intense light penetrating into the darkness of the night, and two walls of brightness reaching from earth to heaven. Between these walls angels, were flying up to heaven, bearing, with songs of joy, the soul of Abbot Robert, one on the right hand, the other on the left. **The soul, as far as it could be seen, was like a globe of fire**."*

On page 203 we read this:

*"She observed that the room was lighted up. **A little ball of light was floating about the room**, and her father was outside the window, looking in upon her.... At the time of the vision her father had been dead a few months, and her infant only a few days."*

Below are various reports from Chapter 15 of the book The Unexplained: A Sourcebook of Strange Phenomena by William R. Corliss.

- In 1897 a bright ball of light was seen to descend and float about six feet above the ground.
- A G. Gilmore reported in the journal Nature in 1919 that he saw a luminous ball lying on the street, and that it vanished with a loud noise.
- An M. F. Faulkner reported in 1964 that his father saw a small egg-shaped ball of brilliant light which spread out to become a sheet of greenish light about 12 feet. "The whole sight then vanished as suddenly as it appeared, with a loud bang," Faulkner reported.
- In 1967 a G. S. Sheldon reported a ball of brilliant blue light descending from a cloud. It passed behind or into a cloud, but seemed to reappear as a ball of bright red light.
- In 1749 someone reported a ball of blue fire rolling along the water.
- An aircraft pilot named M. A. Uman reported in 1968 that a yellow-white ball of light about 18 inches in

diameter passed through his windshield and went moving about in his aircraft, seen by multiple witnesses. It soon left the aircraft and was seen on the wing. The ball of light made no noise.

- The next year an R. C. Jennison reported seeing a similar ball of light (20 centimeters in width) coming from the cabin of the aircraft he was on.
- A Frederic B. Mohr reported in 1966 that a relative had seen a ball of light the size of a basketball, which suddenly disappeared.

A 1982 book says this about hauntings:

"A house which is troubled by a haunting apparition is not unlikely to be troubled also by other kinds of disturbances. These include the appearance of luminous patches, ***balls of light,*** *etc.; the turning of doorhandles and opening of doors; tugging at bedclothes; loud bangs on doors or sequences of inexplicable raps: movement or displacement of small objects; and above all imitative noises - sounds as of the dragging of furniture, the dropping of weights, the breaking of crockery, the opening of drawers, etc., also footsteps, voices, groans, etc., all without any determinable cause. In some cases - generally-called 'hauntings' (45, Chapters 10-12, 15)- phenomena of these kinds may take place without any recurrent apparition, or with only occasional tantalizing glimpses of shadows, misty figures, etc."*

I was sent by email the following interesting account of seeing an orb with the naked eye:

"A few years ago ***I saw quite a big orb****, it's the only one I have ever witnessed. If I did not see this orb I probably would not believe that they exist. Anyway it was in the early hours of the morning in the middle of a field as we were fishing. The weird thing about this is that the orb approached me it seemed like it grew as it got closer, it came within 10 feet of me. I was startled but not scared, my mind went a little panic because it could not comprehend what it was seeing. But after the initial shock I stared at it and i tried to focus on detail like look inside it but the moment I tried to do this something weird happened, the orb had some kind of control on my focus, it was like some kind of force on my vision, when I really tried to focus the force blurred my vision. I could feel that it did not want me to focus on detail. After a minute or two of the stand off it gently floated away, hovering close to the ground before disappearing into thin air."*

NFL quarterback Baker Mayfield reports the following orb sighting, reporting a "very bright ball of light":

*"Almost 100%, Em and I just saw a UFO drop straight out of the sky on our way home from dinner... We stopped and looked at each other and asked if either of us saw it... **Very bright ball of light** going straight down out of the sky towards Lake Travis."*

In his very interesting book *The Supreme Adventure* the author Robert Crookall cites the following account told by an E. W. Oaten who witnessed the death of his friend Daisy:

*"I saw a faint, smoke-like vapour rise from the body. It rose some few feet above the bed and stayed there. It was full of motion and rolled over and over until **it became a ball of greyish smoke,** in a state of motion, with slight traces of opalescence in it here and there. It condensed and grew larger, supplied with a steady stream from the body, a stream of vapour some three inches in diameter. **Slowly the ball assumed the size of about 5 ft. 6 in. in length by 18 in. in diameter.** Condensation continued until it became to me, a semi-solid body, light-grey in colour, but still like a volume of smoke all in motion. Then, gradually, definition began to come. It assumed the form of a roughly-moulded dummy of the human form. An umbilical cord united it with the physical body. I could see the flow of energy in the umbilical cord. The etheric form began to assume the perfect shape. . . . Presently there was the exact duplicate of Daisy floating face downwards in the air. It was connected to the body by the silver cord through which her life slowly escaped. Then the form began to heave and rock, like a balloon tearing at its moorings. The silver cord began to stretch. It grew thinner and thinner at the middle until at last it snapped and the floating form assumed an upright attitude. It was the living duplicate of the sleeping form on the bed. She turned to me and smiled. She was thanking me for the hours I had spent in trying to help her. Then, from the corner of the room, near the ceiling, there came a rush. Two white-robed figures, a man and a woman...came to her, and wrapping their robes around her, they floated away . . . ."*

Robert Crookall's book *Out of the Body Experiences* is a fascinating account of highly unusual psychic experiences. On page 107 we read this:

"F. W. Fitzsimons saw 'a small luminous ball.' Then the face of his (discarnate) mother appeared in it."

On the next page we read, "J. J. Morse was told that 'a luminous sphere' left a body and 'gradually assumed the form of the person who had died.' "

In the September 1861 edition of *The Spiritual Magazine*, page 386, we hear of a Dr. John F. Gray, who supposedly had "the

largest practice of any physician in New York." Dr. Gray supplied this account from a friend who claimed to have seen an apparition of his wife:

*"**A globular light rose up from the floor** behind me, and as it became brighter a face, surmounted by a crown, was distinctly seen by the medium and myself. Next, the head appeared, as if covered with a white veil: this was withdrawn after the figure had risen some feet higher, and I recognised unmistakeably the full head and face of my wife, surrounded by a semi-circle of light about 18 inches in diameter. The recognition was complete, derived alike from the features and her natural expression. The globe of light was then raised, and a female hand held before it was distinctly visible. Each of these manifestations was repeated several times, as if to leave no doubt in our minds. Now the figure, coming lower down and turning its head, displayed falling over the globe of light, long flowing hair which even in its shade of colour, appeared like the natural tresses of my wife, and like hers was unusually luxuriant."*

In an online book on psychic phenomena, we read the following, which includes a reference to Frederic Myers and his book *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*:

*"My father tells the story of **a globe of light being seen near a person who had died.** This occurred in a house which was lit by kerosene lamps during the night while relatives were sitting up with the body. **The globe of light hung near the deceased person for a while then slowly floated away. This strange type of story is repeated many times by Myers and others who have investigated the existence of the soul.** The typical story is that after the person dies, a dim glow of light is sometimes seen (and photographed) above the person's head. The globe is attached to the head by a thin thread which becomes thinner as the globe of light floats higher, and it finally breaks as the globe floats away. The globe of light is considered to be the soul by some observers."*

The Scole Report (which can be read in full here) is one of the most fascinating accounts ever written of inexplicable phenomena. Observers from the Society for Psychical Research reported their observations of a host of strange phenomena. One of the biggest things reported was mysterious lights floating about indoors. The report is light on photographic evidence, but heavy on eyewitness testimony of paranormal-seeming anomalies.

In Appendix G of the report, we read some testimony by Ingrid

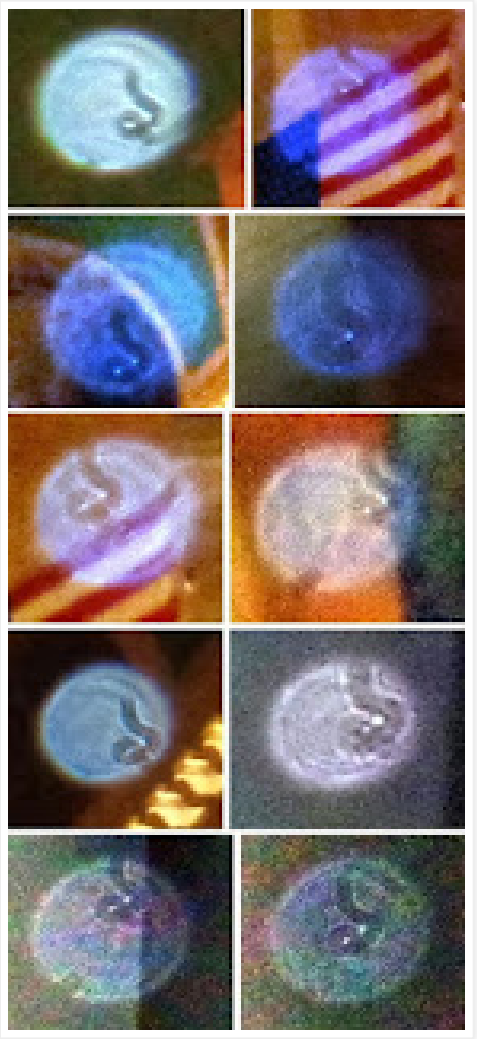
Slack, who is identified as a psychologist at the Open University. She reports the following:

*"**There appeared a ball of diffused light**, which I estimated to have a diameter of about 20 cm, close to the ceiling...The ball had no physical boundary: **it was simply a three-dimensional orb of diffused golden light**...Slowly the orb moved toward the center of the room...I became aware of an overwhelming feeling of gentleness and love which seemed to accompany this particular phenomenon or, more accurately, which this phenomenon seemed to embody....I cannot explain why I should have experienced such an intense emotional reaction to the glowing orb."*

The long book "The Voices" by Vice-Admiral William Usborne Moore (which can be read online here) is an astonishing account of seances that occurred in the presence of the medium Etta Wriedt around 1912. Moore and numerous other witnesses quoted in the book describe hearing mysterious voices at these seances, corresponding to deceased friends or relatives. They often report the voices giving information that was known only to themselves or their departed friends or relatives. On page 328 a witness reports seeing balls of light floating about at such a seance. We read this:

*"**Balls of light, white, or sometimes tinted red or gold, floated about the room.** They came behind us, and moved up and down in front of us, over our heads, sometimes one, sometimes two or three at a time, in different parts of the room, and again in the cabinet, where they seemed to rain down like oval- shaped meteors."*

Back in my glory days as an orb photographer, I used to get the most astonishing pattern repetitions when photographing mysterious orbs. We see below a distinctive pattern I photographed on different days in 2016. Note the common elements of the pattern: a vertical stripe twisting over to the right and then twisting back again to the left, forming a loop with a little circle in the middle (and also a little stripe part underneath the loop) To see many other similar repeating orb patterns, see this post.



Hippolyte Baraduc was a paranormal investigator. At www.archive.org we can read in English his book *The Human Soul: Its Movements, Its Lights and Its Iconography of the Fluidic Invisible*, a book with some interesting photos mixed with lots of dogmatic speculative metaphysics. Baraduc also wrote a book in the French language, one entitled "The vibrations of human vitality: biometric method applied to sensitive and neurotics." The 1904 book can be read here. (The www.archive.org site incorrectly lists Baraduc's death as occurring in 1902, but he actually died in 1909.)

In that book on page 271 we see what may well be the first photo of a mysterious orb ever published. It is shown below:

Fig. 36. — Libération expérimentale et momentanée de la boule d'Azur du corps spirituel hors l'Ether et la chair montrant le lien persistant avec le corps, le fil de l'existence.

At the top of the photo we see a mysterious orb floating, one looking like the orbs so often showing up in modern photos. The author makes comments that seem to be largely his own speculations. Below is the translation of the photo caption I get using Google translate: "Experimental release and momentance of the Azure ball of the spiritual body out of the Ether and the flesh showing the persistent link with the body, the thread of existence." The photo in the book is black and white, but the caption refers to an azure ball, meaning the orb was apparently blue. Presumably the author saw such a blue color when seeing the orb with his eyes.

For many years Michael Prescott had a blog in which he wrote at great length on topics of the paranormal and life after death. Prescott has stopped updating the blog, but it is still online, and makes a fine scholarly resource. Its very many blog entries are well tagged. So, for example, you can click on the "NDEs" tag on the left, and get 92 blog entries dealing with near-death experiences. In one of those entries I read a review of a book called "Near Death in the ICU" by Laurin Bellg MD. Prescott states, "**One common thread involves seeing a spiritual being (or more than one) in the form of a glowing point of light or a luminous orb.**"

In the same Prescott post we read this quote from the Bellg book:

*"[Marlene] soon became distracted by the presence of a soft **blue orb of light** that came into view on the opposite side of the room....While the orb was slowly approaching, she noticed that the voices below [in the hospital] became thinner and more distant while the visual scene grew ever smaller and*

more remote, as if she were looking through the wrong end of a telescope. As the orb, about the size of a beach ball, came to rest in front of her, she felt overwhelmed with emotion and intense feelings of peace, love and complete safety."

This is only the beginning of a long and interesting near-death experience involving some fascinating details you can read in the Prescott post.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 4:58 AM No comments:

Labels: life after death, orbs, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations

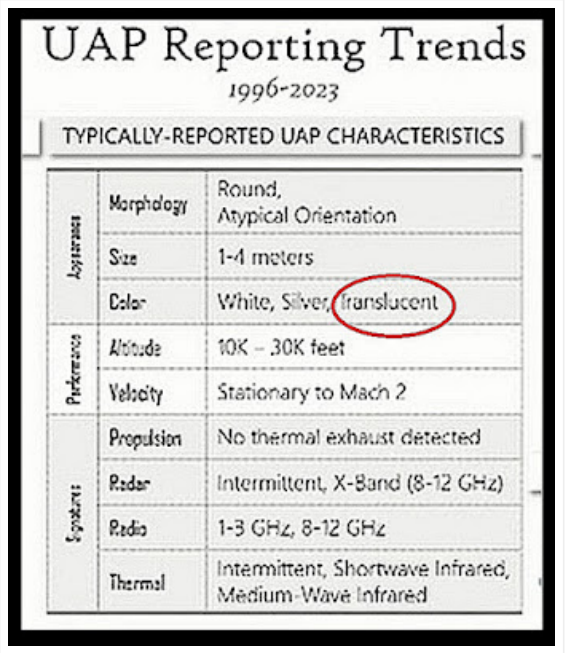
Friday, June 2, 2023

Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 2 of 4)

A recent article on the Daily Mail site (www.dailymail.com) has this headline:

"NASA holds historic UFO hearing: Agency unveils first findings from study into unidentified craft in our skies AND oceans - as Pentagon chief FINALLY admits 'metallic orbs' have been seen 'all over the world' "

But don't conclude from this that all the strange orbs seen are metallic. At the 32:00 mark of the video here, a 4 -hour video of the NASA conference, we see a conference screen that has the visual below. The UAP refers to "unidentified aerial phenomena." I have circled the word "translucent" on the screen. Translucent orbs are not metallic.



At the 32:33 mark in the clip we hear a narrator saying "the vast

majority of what has been reported on and what we have data on -- a little less than half now -- are orbs, round spheres." The choice of words is careless, because if you have a little less than half that is not a "vast majority."

Mysterious orbs mainly show up in photographs, as if they were fleeting manifestations appearing too quickly to be seen with the naked eye. Translucent orbs have been photographed for many years both in the sky and indoors, with there being thousands of good photos in colors such as blue, green, pink, yellow, purple, orange and red. In my photos I have got more than 800 mysterious striped orbs, which have often appeared in repeating stripe patterns. But in many cases people will report seeing a mysterious orb with the naked eye. I quoted many such accounts in Part 1 of this 4-part series. Below are some more.

Netflix has a version of the *Unsolved Mysteries* series much more recent than the original version. I recommend anyone watching it use the Netflix feature allowing you to choose particular episodes based on their content. Most of the episodes are rather boring cases of missing persons. But there are some interesting episodes dealing with paranormal mysteries. In the "Berkshires UFO" episode, we have eyewitness testimony of incredibly strange UFO activity occurring on September 1, 1969 in the western part of Massachusetts, near Great Barrington. At the 16:35 mark a woman named Nancy gives this narrative:

*"And as we exited the bridge...I can remember this like yesterday. **There was a light ball hovering**, maybe about two stories high. We were amazed. I mean, we'd never seen anything like it. It was glowing."*

Then at the 16:56 mark another witness of this event says this:

"*And then as it rose, it fired these rods of light...**My brother saw this orange orb**, and it seemed to have this roll to it."*

At the 12:35 mark of the video interview here, we have Travis Taylor PhD state this about an observation at the mysterious Skinwalker Ranch: " We had a sphere fly over the ranch that was unmistakably an unidentified flying object, not just some aerial phenomenon."

On page 258 of a 1906 publication we read the following:

"*It is well known amongst psychic investigators that many spirits manifest their presence by **globes of light floating in the air,** so I naturally concluded that the strange light I had seen had some connexion with the suicide committed there. Similar lights have been seen in churchyards, especially over*

newly filled graves, and are vulgarly termed ' corpse candles.' They are often a sign that the spirit of the deceased is still attached or attracted to its old tenement of clay."

In an Edge Science publication of the Society for Scientific Exploration, we read quite a bit about people seeing orbs with their naked eyes. You can read the publication by using this link.

On page 19 we read this:

"Within five months of the AAWSAP start date in 2008 a team of 50 PhD and Masters level scientists, technicians, engineers, analysts, military intelligence professionals, program managers, and security officers had been recruited, hired, and were being assigned security clearances. During the program's 24 months duration plus a three month no-cost extension, BAASS delivered over one hundred technical reports on different aspects of UFO performance, as well as reports describing medical, psychological, and physiological effects of UFOs and associated phenomena. Skinwalker Ranch One area of investigation initiated by AAWSAP involved the (in)famous Skinwalker Ranch where multiple UFO sightings had taken place over decades as well as a plethora of anomalies that included cattle mutilations, ***sightings of orbs of different colors****, discarnate entities, and poltergeist activity (Kelleher and Knapp, 2005)."*

Later we read this:

"Journalist George Knapp made several visits to Skinwalker Ranch before and after the AAWSAP/BAASS investigations on Skinwalker Ranch, some lasting overnight. Subsequent to the trips, Knapp reported that his wife experienced multiple apparitions in their home, including ***sightings of blue orbs*** *outside the window of their place in Las Vegas."*

Later we read this: "Other scientists and their families saw orbs and black shadowy forms in their homes."

The article mentions a "Hitchhiker Effect" that may come after visiting Skinwalker Ranch. We read this:

"*Future research could also allow us to test various hypotheses on the mechanism involved in the Hitchhiker Effect. The common denominator with people who experience the effects of bringing something home is not respiratory distress, hemorrhagic fever, or other symptoms of viral infection. Alterations in a person's perceptual environment appears to be the most common manifestation. Symptoms include waking up with black shadow humanoids standing over their beds;*

various types of poltergeist activity; ***colored orbs flying through people's bedrooms*** *and homes at night; apparitions of dead children or adults; unexplained loud noises around the house; and much more."*

The book *Seeing Angels* by Emma Heathcote-James is a very interesting compilation of accounts of people who claim to have seen angels. On page 211 we have this account by a soldier:

"He described being in bed one night and was startled to see ***'two balls of light appear and "hover" over his bed,*** *moving about in a figure-of-eight-style pattern,* ***after a few minutes the light metamorphosized into an angel'****, which looked down on him, smiling before slowly disappearing."*

The book *Experiencing the Soul* is a very interesting book about paranormal phenomena and life after death. An example of its very interesting accounts is on the page here. According to the account, a woman hit by a hit-and-run driver was found on the side of a highway by a man trying to help. Dying and apparently drifting in and out of normal consciousness, she said that she was happy because she was with her father, and asked the man to tell this to her mother. After contacting the mother, the man found that the woman's father had died an hour before the woman died, 700 miles away.

On page 76 we have an account by a man using a mirror device called a psychomanateum to try to communicate with his deceased son Stephen. We read this:

"One night as I looked in the mirror, ***a sphere of Light appeared in the darkened room and came outside of the mirror*** *about 12 inches in diameter. Stephen appeared in three-quarters view, moving just as he did when alive."*

Here are statements from a news story:

"ANOTHER US Navy sailor has come forward to speak out after he witnessed ***a 40 ft ball of light UFO hovering over deck of the USS Ronald Reagan. Dozens - or even hundreds - of crewmen are reported to have witnessed the object*** *hovering over the flight deck of the nuclear powered aircraft carrier in the strange episode from 2004....Derek witnessed it alongside another sailor, who also confirmed she saw the object in an interview with Mr Beaty. She described the object as an 'orange globe floating over the flight deck' that was keeping pace with the ship - which is believed to have been moving around 22 knots."*

A mysterious orange orb? That sounds familiar. You can see hundreds of my photos of mysterious orange orbs by using the link here, and continuing to press the Older Posts link at the bottom right.

At www.politico.com, we read a reference to Wisconsin Congressman Mike Gallagher:

*"Gallagher also raised eyebrows by asking about a high-profile report of a **'glowing red orb'** that was reportedly observed over Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana in 1967, 'in which 10 of our nuclear ICBMs were rendered inoperable.' "*

In an interesting book by Aleksandr Aksakov, we have the following account:

*"About the end of July, 1896, Madam d'Esperance came to Paris for a brief visit. In the presence of five persons [Madam Aksakof, Madam Boutlerof, her friend the Baronne de Zeidlitz, Madam Cauvin and myself], she tried to see how much of her mediumistic power she had regained. She sat upon a sofa, we upon chairs ; the lights were extinguished and we waited in silence, without forming a chain. After a few moments **we all saw a luminous ball** in the direction of the medium, at about the height of her chest, as it seemed to us. The ball looked like mist, or a luminous fog. It spread out towards the floor, then contracted, assumed the most various shapes, and at times displayed very brilliant points, like small stars. Finally, Madam Cauvin, who seemed to be entirely unfamiliar with such manifestations, thought she recognized the form of an infant. She became alarmed, wished to get away, cried out, and made so much trouble as to put an end to the manifestations. The luminous vapor diminished in volume, and finally disappeared."*

A news report says this (referring to Unidentified Aerial Phenomena or UAPs):

*"Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence Scott Bray testified that reports of UAPs are 'frequent' and have been on the rise for more than a decade. He showed lawmakers previously classified video of **a spherical object zooming past an F-18 fighter jet**."*

The book *Man's Survival After Death* by Charles Tweedale is a book of astonishing narratives, many being eyewitness accounts of the paranormal by the author. You can read the book for free at www.archive.org. On page 278 we have this account of an orb growing in size, one seen by the author's wife:

"I now lit a candle, and my wife informed me that shortly before she awoke me she was herself awakened, and perceived ***a bright globular light at the bed's foot****, just at my feet, but apparently projected upon or enclosing the brass rail.* ***At first it was the size of a large orange, but began to increase in height and breadth until at the lapse of a minute it had the diameter of a man's body****, and stood up three feet above the brass rail."*

Robert Crookall's book *What Happens When You Die* has some fascinating accounts of out-of-body experiences. On page 28 we have an account in which a woman says she floated through a wall during an out-of-body experience. She says that she then saw a gray orb "stationary over the roof-tops." She said she got the impression of being watched by the orb, and then "returned to her body." She says that twenty-three days later she again saw the orb, which she described as a "globe."

I read the book "Materialisations-Experimente mit M. Franek-Kluski," which is not easy because it is available only in German. Luckily I can use Google Translate to get English versions of the pages. The book is an astonishing record of seances with a medium. The most remarkable thing about the sessions described is that the observers (Gustave Geley and Albert von Schrenck-Notzing) were able (using paraffin wax) to get plaster casts as permanent physical evidence of what they had seen. On page 58 we read the following astonishing account:

"I asked him if he could see my sister in the 'Astral' who has been dead for 3 years. Answer: Yes. At the same moment I felt a woman's hand gently placed on my forehead, making the sign of the cross there and encircling it with a circle, as my sister always did when she was alive when she said goodbye to me. I recognized her hand, dimly lit, against the edge of the fluorescent screen that lay on the table in front of me. It moved several times before my eyes, and more and more I thought I recognized it. She squeezed my hand, patted my face. I can no longer doubt that it is her hand that I feel. A short time later ***a glowing orb forms in front of my face and moves away; then she comes very close to my face and to my great astonishment and also to my great joy I notice the fully recognizable facial features of my sister****, who smiles at me as in real life. However, she seems much younger to me, about the way she was when she was 25. She died at the age of 54. The upper part of the head is surrounded by cloudy veils."*

On page 128 of the very interesting book "Parting Visions : an Exploration of Pre-Death Psychic and Spiritual Experiences," we

have an account by by a woman named Anne who was diagnosed with leukemia at age four. She says at age six she saw a "ball of light" appear in her bedroom, and her pain went away. She says the ball of light transformed until she could see a beautiful glowing woman inside the light. She says the woman guided her on a journey to some ethereal realm, and then took her back to her room, promising that things would now be easier for the child. Hospital tests the next day indicated the leukemia was starting to reverse. Within two weeks the child's blood tests were normal.

In volume 2 of the work *Phantasms of the Living*, page 76, we read the following account of an orb seen at the hour of death.

"About the year 1841, I was in a room with my father in our house in the Isle of Wight, when he exclaimed, 'Good God, what is that?' starting up as he spoke, and apparently looking at something. He then turned to me and said that ***he had seen a ball of light pass through the room****, and added, 'Depend upon it. Nurse Simonds is dead.' This was an old servant in London, to whom he had been sending money, in illness. In course of post came information that she passed away at the very time in question."*

The page here allows you to search accounts of near-death experiences at the site www.nderf.org. Using this search page tool, I found some interesting references to orbs in accounts of near-death experiences.

Nick S. (2006-03-11, ID #767):

"In front of me was something that's hard to describe, almost like an ***orb*** *or a spirit of some kind, but I heard someone say, 'You're not supposed to be here yet. Come with me and go back to your home. It's not your time.' I asked, 'Am I dead?'"*

Debra C. (2008-02-03, ID #1542):

"I was floating in place, colored ***orbs*** *of indescribable color were coming toward me and all around me a feeling of peace and calm that you cannot describe, beautiful!"*

Daniel T. (2008-03-02, ID #1565):

"As I was floating, I saw ***orbs*** *of light and as I passed, I saw people's faces, which I did not recognize. As I got to the end of the tunnel, the only face that I recognized was my Granny Wilson's. My Granny Wilson had died in the mid-1940's and I had seen her picture on numerous occasions."*

Cam (2008-12-01, ID #1759):

*"First came absolute darkness, then a bright **orb** of light. The light was more than light; it had a hexagonal tessellation of radiant yellow/orange, but mostly white."*

Vicki P (2011-07-04, ID #1788):

*"The next thing I knew, I was going rapidly through a tunnel toward a light. I saw small, bright **orbs** of light accompanying me and I said to myself, 'Angels!' Before I could reach the light, I returned to my body and came to."*

Michael G (2010-02-26, ID #2178):

*"Then I saw this large, golden **orb** in front of me, suspended in the blue. It was close enough to touch, but I didn't. Its surface undulated, like the sea - rising and falling. Immediately, I thought, 'This is the sun,' but then remember saying, 'I am so sorry.' Instantly, without word, I was corrected. This '**orb**' in front of me was no 'thing,' it was a personality. I don't know what it was. It didn't speak to me. It just was so beautiful to look at and be with; I didn't want to leave its presence.*

Joshua B (2015-08-02, ID #3982):

*"Wherever this somewhere was, I had no human form. I was like a small ball of yellow light. Though in darkness, I knew I could see in all directions at once. Around me appeared other **orbs** of light. The **orbs** were other people who had passed away. We all glowed with different shades of light. Some were more pink, some were blue and I was yellow. I remember that all of our thoughts flowed into and out of each other simultaneously. Despite this, I could still process my own thoughts."*

Lewis D (2007-12-16, ID #1391):

*"At that time everything went black, so black it was as though I could feel it. Then I saw a **ball of light** that seemed to be moving closer to me, it seemed to rouse interest in me at the time. I was moving closer to the ball it was perfectly round with twinkles in it."*

Wendi (2008-01-02, ID #1461):

*"After leaving my body I was pulled into a void or darkness. In the distance, I saw a white **ball of light** come close and closer to me. I couldn't really make out what it was until I got closer.... It was a deceased friend of mine who had committed suicide the previous year. I was very close to this person in life, we went to High School together and he was a support to me in life as well as in death. He told me that I needed to return there was a strong sense of needing to return."*

Robert C (2010-01-02, ID #2072):

*"I tried to assure them I was going into the light but they denied my passage. They were adamant it was not my time. Then I noticed I was a **ball of light**. I no longer had the shape of a human being. My consciousness was spherical in all directions at once and I had a god like knowing. Then all at once, I saw my entire life pass before me in minute detail."*

Laurie L (2008-03-15, ID #4489):

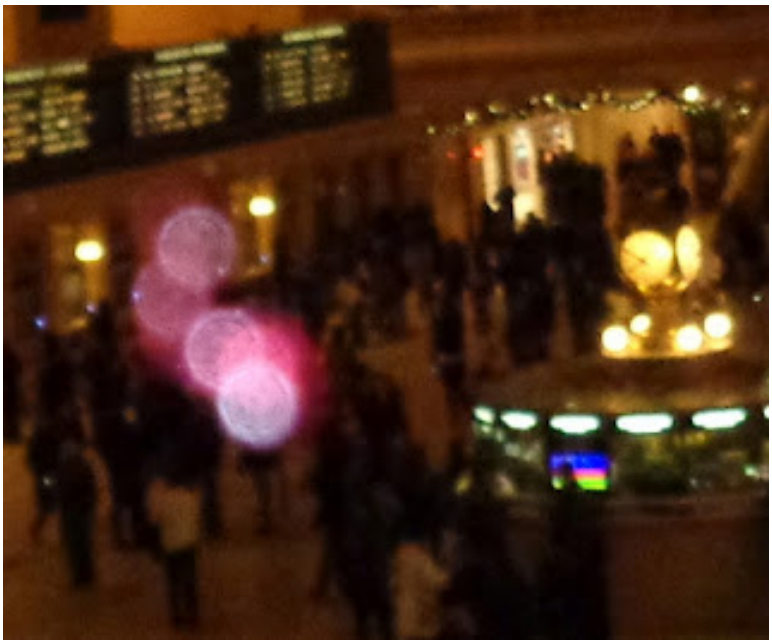
*"I could hear the most beautiful music and I could feel it moving through me. The breeze blew against the tall golden wheat stalks, and as it did I could feel the spirit of all things living around me: animals, plants, the elements. I was one with them. I looked up and saw a huge **ball of light** that cast the purest, warm light all around me and felt God touch my skin."*

A book on ball lightning quotes a case of a stewardess reporting a mysterious orb inside an aircraft

"Suddenly a bright golden sphere of about 40-50 cm in diameter [about 15 inches] appeared amongst the three of us...It shot down the aisle toward the rear of the plane. We three saw it for sure...There cannot have been a thunderstorm outside, because then we would have been sitting with the seat belts fastened."

A case like this should be classified as a mysterious orb rather than ball lightning, because a lack of any thunderstorm, lightning storm, explosion, high voltage or outdoor location

Below from 2015 is a photo I took of a speeding pink orb in Grand Central Terminal in New York City:



I have got this "string of pearls" effect shown here in 100 different photos, as you can be using the link here, and continuing to press the "Older Posts" link at the bottom right. Check back on June 6 and June 10 for Part 3 and Part 4 of this series, which will be as long as the first two parts.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:22 AM No comments:

Labels: angels, life after death, orbs, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations

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Monday, May 29, 2023

Naked-Eye Sightings of Mysterious Orbs (Part 1 of 4)

People seeing things with their eyes that they cannot explain is a common experience, much more common than the average person realizes. For example, a scientific study of apparition sightings by widows attempted to interview all of the widows or widowers in a small area of Wales. It found that 14% of widows or widowers reported seeing an apparition of their deceased spouse, with 39% reporting feeling a presence of their deceased spouse, and 13% hearing their deceased spouse. Then there are people who report seeing with their own eyes mysterious orbs.

Mysterious orbs mainly show up in photographs, as if they were fleeting manifestations appearing too quickly to be seen with the naked eye. Orbs of many colors have showed up countless times in my photos, in which there have been almost 1500 mysterious blue orbs, and more than 800 mysterious striped orbs. For example, below is a photo I took showing two mysterious striped orbs, one orange:

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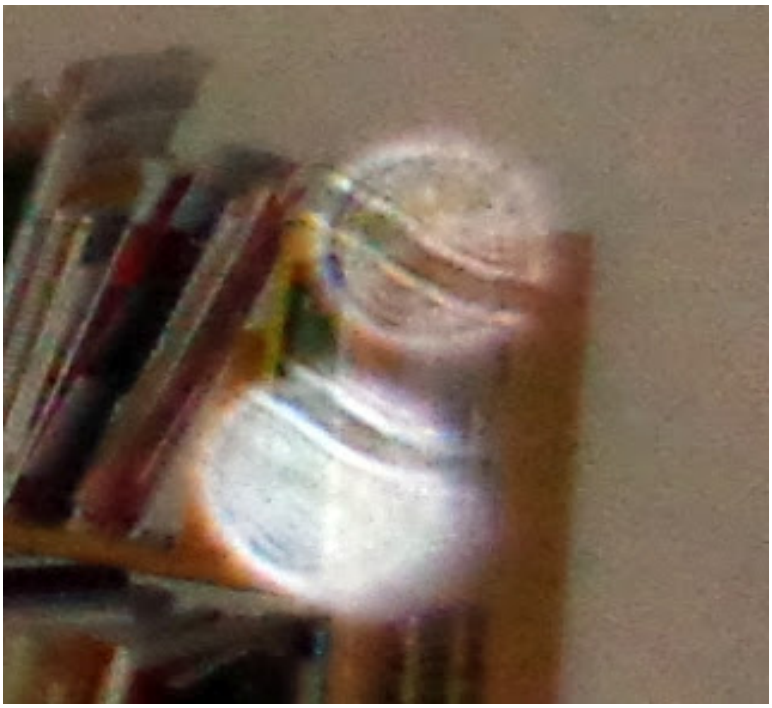

But in many cases people will report seeing a mysterious orb with the naked eye. Let's look at some of the very many such cases I have collected.

The site www.nderf.org and the site www.iands.org are two of the main sites presenting accounts of near-death experiences. Looking at some of the most recent accounts at the first of these sites, I quickly found the account below:

"This is about my wife, Vera Gonzalez, who passed on May 7th, 2016, and the attending physician assistant/NP-C and ***I witnessed a light orb leave her body within minutes of dying****. A concentrated white orb-light came out of her chest through the sternum, rose and hovered momentarily and then departed the room while accelerating. I thought I was imagining things until the physician assistant asked me if I saw the light. He said he had seen it before and that it was Vera's spirit."*

The book *Beyond the Impossible* is a fascinating read about mysteries of the unknown, told in chronological order. On one page we read this:

"Glowing spheres have startled many travellers along the lonely stretches of road that criss-cross the vast expanse of Alexandria Station....Mysteriologists have uncovered several locations around the world where balls of light variously labelled will-o-the-wisps, ghost lights or spook lights, are regularly seen....The most famous examples are probably the American varieties, the Saratoga and Marfa lights of Texas, the Brown Mountain lights

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and Maco lights of North Carolina, and the Hornet spook lights of Missouri."

On the page here we read that some of these "ghost lights" are associated with reports of ghost sightings. I was surprised to read of a "Spook Light Road" near Neosho, Missouri, where my late grandmother lived most of her life. On the page here we read this account:

"*In November 1977, a married couple climbing Mount Snezka...lost their way and found themselves in serious difficulties when it began to snow heavily. Realising their position was becoming serious* ***the two climbers were suddenly confronted by a large blue globe*** *which floated several feet off the ground, shining with a clear, warm light."*

We are told the strange globe guided the two to safety. At the page here we read this:

"Bobbing and bouncing along a dirt road in northeast Oklahoma is the Hornet Spook Light, a paranormal enigma for more than a century. ***Described most often as an orange ball of light****, the orb travels from east to west along a four-mile gravel road."*

In the video here, a young PhD candidate describes a near-death experience during a very severe medical problem. Around the 2:55 mark, she describes encountering three colored orbs that seemed to her like guardian angels, having colors of ruby, amethyst (purple) and emerald. It's quite an astonishing tale.

At this link you can read "Immortality Proved by the Testimony of Sense" by Abraham Cummings, which has some astonishing testimony. On page 38 Cumming gives the following story of an orb "in the air" turning into the form of a woman:

"Sometime in July, 1806, in the evening, I was informed by two persons that they had just seen the Spectre in the field. About ten minutes after, I went out, not to see a miracle, for I believed that they had been mistaken. Looking toward an eminence, twelve rods distance from the house, I saw there, as I supposed, one of the white rocks. This continued my opinion of their spectre, and I paid no more attention to it. Three minutes after, I accidentally looked in the same direction, and ***the white rock was in the air ; its form a complete Globe, white with a tincture of red, like the damask rose, and its diameter about two feet.*** *Fully satisfied that this was nothing ordinary, I went toward it for more accurate examination. While my eye was constantly upon it, I went on four or five steps,* ***when it came to me from the distance of eleven rods, as quick as lightning, and instantly assumed a personal form***

the Human Face"

It Seemed Her Suicide Was Not Her End

Scientist Flubs and Flops, #5

Why It's Not Scientific to Call Speculative Things "Scientific"

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- They Had Flourishing Minds But Broken Brains
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- When an Apparition Is Seen by Multiple Observers: 17 More Cases
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- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- Why DNA Cannot Be a Specification of a Human

***with a female dress**, but did not appear taller than a girl seven years old. While I looked upon her, I said in my mind, 'you are no tall enough for the woman who has so frequently appeared among us.' Immediately she grew up as large and as tall as I considered that woman to be. Now she appeared glorious. On her head was the representation of the sun diffusing the luminous, rectilinear rays every way to the ground."*

Many of the testimonies in this case are dated, particularly following page 41, where we have dated witness statements from quite a few people who give their names. On page 31 we read this summary about the same apparition:

"Sometimes she appeared to two or three ; then to five or six ; then to ten or twelve ; again to twenty, and once to more than forty witnesses. She appeared in several apartments of Mr. Blaisdel's house, and several times in the cellar. She also appeared at other houses, and several times in the open field, as already observed. There, white as the light, she moved like a cloud above the ground in personal form and magnitude, in the presence of more than forty people. She tarried with them till after day-light, and vanished : not because she was afraid of the sun : for she had then several times appeared when the sun was shining."

A Brown University professor of philosophy (Curt John Ducasse) said this about the case, mentioning some experience of his own:

"Several of the witnesses report, as does the Rev. Mr. Cummings, that the apparition begins as a formless small luminous cloud, which then grows and in a moment takes the form of the deceased Mrs. Butler. (This incidentally, was what occurred when, over fifty years ago in New York, the present writer witnessed in red light but not under test conditions a purported gradual materialization of a man's body.)"

At the site Stan Gordon's UFO Anomalies Zone, there is a very long post on recent sightings of UFOs and other anomalies. We read this:

*"The year 2022 will be remembered, however, for the **unprecedented increase of reports of low level encounters with mini-UFOs- those small orbs or balls of light** reported close to the ground, or on the ground, and in some cases approaching within feet of witnesses....Over the years, I have interviewed numerous witnesses and I have received information from widespread areas on cases concerning observations of these smaller objects on the ground*

- A "Water Memory" Effect I Have Often Photographed
- 25 Who Were "Ghost-Told" of a Death
- Why the Origin of Language Is Inexplicable Under Orthodox Assumptions
- Visualizing a Top-Down Theory of Mind and Cosmic Connectivity
- Disastrous Blunders of the Experts
- Cosmic Coincidence Cover-up
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- Cosmic Fine-Tuning Visualized
- Why Machines Will Not Soon Be as Intelligent as Men
- Cloud Computing and the Concept of Non-local Consciousness
- There Is No Plausible Explanation For How Brains Can Store Very Long-Term Memory
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- Still More Dreams or Visions That Seemed to Foretell a Death
- The Evidence for Out-of-Body Experiences
- GOAL and Soul: Postulating What We Need to Explain Humans
- The Chemistry Professors Who Documented the Paranormal
- The Degenerative Spiral of "Grand Explanation" Academia
- The Complexity Concealments of Shrink-Speaking Professors
- The Hypothesis of Continuous Life-Force Dependency
- Our Luxury Results Debunk the Multiverse As an Explanation

or just above the ground. ***These objects have ranged in size from a few inches to about a foot or two in diameter. They are often described to be about golf ball to baseball size. The shape is commonly spherical.*** *However, other configurations have been reported. These objects often are light sources of various colors.* ***They sometimes look solid, while in other cases they look transparent or translucent.*** *There have also been some reports of a swirling mass inside of the sphere. There have been other encounters where these objects appeared to be made of metal. For many years, there have been encounters with these objects pacing vehicles and entering them through open windows. There have been other cases of these objects also entering homes through open windows or hovering in front of windows and even tapping on the panes".*

On page 109 of the 2007 book *Ghost Worlds,* Melba Goodwyn states this:

*"My first experience with orb phenomena came at the age of twelve...Suddenly, from s****eemingly out of nowhere, a huge orange sphere appeared before me****. It was a little above my direct sight and as large as a big beach ball. It was pulsating and its very distinct color would fade and deepen in intensity as I watched it....I was astonished as it gently floated right through my midsection! I gasped as I felt it pass through my body...Deep down I knew that I had experienced a spiritual visitation of some sort."*

My Facebook page "Spirit Orbs" now has over 2000 followers, and consists only of photos I took myself. You can see the photos here:

https://www.facebook.com/GhostlyAppearances/photos_stream

Replying to a recent album I published at that site, one Facebook user states this: "An orange orb entered my room and turned my whole room orange. I'll never forget it."

A book offering some startling evidence for the paranormal is the book "Materialisations-Experimente mit M. Franek-Kluski" by Gustave Geley and Albert von Schrenck-Notzing M.D. The title can be translated as "Materialization Experiments with M. Franek-Kluski." The book is in German, but with the help of Google Translate it is fairly easy to get an English translation of any page.

On page 58 we have this remarkable account, which may be of great interest to anyone getting mysterious orbs in photos:

- Anatomically Uninformative DNA, Nonfunctional Intermediates and the Uselessness of Early Stages Are Why Gradualism Does Not Work
- 30 Misleading Terms Used in Science Literature
- The Bigelow Prize Essays on the Best Evidence for Life After Death
- The Top 27 Numbers to Ponder When Judging the Chance of Accidental Biological Origins
- Any Pathway to an Afterlife Realm Implies the Possibility of Reverse Visits
- 120+Types of Paranormal or Anomalous Experiences
- The Philosophy of Teleospiritism
- Why We Were Told So Often the Huge Lie That DNA Is a Specification for Building Humans
- 7 Navigation Problems That Discredit Materialism and Ideas of Accidental Life
- Candid Confessions of the Scientists
- Some Recommended Online Reading
- Professors Persist in "Proud Preston" Pretending
- Some Accidentally Unachievable Molecular Machines in Your Body
- A Short History of Materialism
- Grant Them an Infinity of Planets and They Still Cannot Explain Life or Mind
- Spookiest Years, Part 12: The Year 1874
- The Top 10 Unsolved Problems of Science: A Candid List
- 4 Reasons Why Very Much of Protein Complex Origination Is Physically Inexplicable
- 40+ Leading Researchers of the Paranormal
- The Missing Specifications Problem in Biology
- Problems a Hundred Miles Over Our Heads

Other Blogs by This Author

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"I asked him if he could see my sister in the 'Astral' who has been dead for 3 years. Answer: Yes. At the same moment I felt a woman's hand gently placed on my forehead, making the sign of the cross there and encircling it with a circle, as my sister always did when she was alive when she said goodbye to me. I recognized her hand, dimly lit, against the edge of the fluorescent screen that lay on the table in front of me. It moved several times before my eyes, and more and more I thought I recognized it. She squeezed my hand, patted my face. I can no longer doubt that it is her hand that I feel. ***A short time later a glowing orb forms in front of my face and moves away****; then she comes very close to my face and to my great astonishment and also to my great joy I notice the fully recognizable facial features of my sister, who smiles at me as in real life. However, she seems much younger to me, about the way she was when she was 25. She died at the age of 54. The upper part of the head is surrounded by cloudy veils."*

Was the idea here that the orb turned into an apparition of the narrator's sister? It is hard to tell whether that was seen or whether the orb was a kind of harbinger of such an appearance.

At www.archive.org, readers who have done the free registration with the site can read the very interesting book *Miracles: A Parascientific Inquiry Into Wondrous Phenomena* by D. Scott Rogo, who died an untimely death at the age of only 40. On page 227 Rogo describes events of September 13, 1917 at Fatima, Portugal, a month before the more famous October 13, 1917 event involving a disk-like sky anomaly. We read this account of September 13, 1917:

"The sun began to dim mysteriously around noon, stars could be seen in the sky, and an orb of white light appeared and settled in the tree. One of the witnesses was Monsignor John Quareman....He was one of many observers who actually saw the mysterious orb of light that had often appeared when Lucia claimed the apparition was arriving at the oak tree. 'To my surprise,' he later testified, ***'I saw clearly and distinctly a globe of light advancing from east to west****, gliding slowly and majestically through the air.' "*

On page 106 of the same book we read this about someone having out-of-body experiences (OBEs): "Blue Harary usually perceives himself as an orb of light or as a speck of awareness free-floating while undergoing his OBEs." On page 209 we read this:

"Maximin Giraud (age eleven) and Melanie Mathieu (age fifteen) were playing when ***suddenly they saw a large orb of glowing light approaching them from the heavens.***

External Sites

- Top 20 Cosmology Blogs
- My Free Books on Archive.org

Featured Post

Psychic Experiences in the News, Part 2

Here is the second in a series of videos I am making about news accounts of ESP, precognition, out-of-body experiences, prophetic dreams ...

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Labels

- 'Oumuamua (1)
- 3D printing (1)
- abiogenesis (1)
- abundance (1)
- acupuncture (1)
- after death communication (2)
- age of mankind (1)
- age of universe (3)
- aging (2)
- AI (1)
- alien abductions (2)
- alien attack (1)
- alien computer simulation (4)
- alien spaceships (1)
- alien visitation (1)
- alternate universe (1)
- android (1)
- anecdotal evidence (2)

As it neared a small stream bed, it opened to reveal the figure of a beautiful woman."

Rogo's research work with Blue Harary (Stuart Blue Harary) is described in Chapter 8 of his book *Mind Beyond the Body: The Mystery of ESP Projection*, which can be read here.

A web site documenting reports of the paranormal tells us "encounters with small spheres low to the ground and in some cases approaching near witnesses have reportedly been taking place for months from various areas of Pennsylvania." The site's latest report on orbs is entitled "More Mysterious Close Encounters with Ground Level Orbs of light (Mini-UFOs) Reported In Pennsylvania-October 23, 2022." One witness says he saw a "**glowing white ball of light**" outdoors 10-12 inches in diameter, and another witness reports seeing indoors a strange blue sphere about a foot and a half in diameter.

A poll by YouGovAmerica surveyed 1000 Americans about any paranormal experiences they may have had. More than two-thirds reported having some type of paranormal experience. Some of the most common experiences were:

"Feeling a presence or unknown energy": 37%

"Hearing a voice of someone who wasn't there": 29%

"Feeling an unexplained change in temperature": 28%

"Seeing lights or other devices turn on or off without explanation": 25%

"Seeing an object move without explanation": 22%

"Seeing unexplained orbs of light": 22%

"Seeing a door open or close without explanation": 20%

"Seeing a ghost or spirit": 20%

"Seeing an angel": 13%

The page describing the poll gives one interesting bit of testimony from one of the people polled:

*"I was in a 100-year-old hotel in Brazil with abandoned floors that were accessible. As my friend and I explored, the temperature dropped and **we saw orbs of light.**"*

In his "Mysterious Universe" post "Strange Lights in the Sky: Secret Experiments or Living Beings?" Nick Redfern discusses some visual sightings of orbs:

*"It didn't appear to be a solid, nuts-and-bolts aircraft of some sort. Rather, **it was a ball of light, around five times the***

- Anfinsen's Dogma (2)
- angels (2)
- animals (1)
- anthropic principle (22)
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- argument against brain storage of all memories (20)
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- artificial intelligence (7)
- artificial planets (1)
- artificial worlds (1)
- asteroid mining (1)
- asteroids (1)
- astral projection (1)
- astrobiology (2)
- astroengineering (3)
- astronomy (14)
- atheism (3)
- augmented reality (2)
- aura (1)
- austerity (1)
- Australian mystery lights (1)
- auto-scheduling of future posts on this site (1)
- automatic writing (3)
- automation (2)
- bad predictions (3)
- behavior genetics (1)
- Bible (1)
- BICEP2 (10)
- biconsciousness (1)
- Big Bang (32)
- Bigfoot (1)
- biocentrism (2)
- biochemistry (2)
- biological fine-tuning (3)
- biology (19)
- biomedical research (3)
- biosafety (1)
- biosignatures (1)

***size of an average traffic light**...He could only sit and stare as the pair of lights bobbed in the air, like floating beach-balls. Suddenly, there was a development; an astounding one. As Angelucci looked on, a voice emanated from one of the balls....Running through the heart of the Big Thicket is a long, thin, and incredibly sandy old road called Bragg Road. That's not what the locals call it, though. To them, it is known as Ghost Light Road. There is a very good reason for this: for at least three centuries, **people have reported seeing weird, small balls of light flitting through the trees** late at night. But, we're not talking about anything quite as down to earth as fireflies. These particular lights vary in size from – approximately – a tennis ball to a beach ball. They also exhibit evidence of intelligence: witnesses describe the lights approaching them, even circling them, in what is occasionally perceived as a playful fashion*."

The strangest part of the article is below:

*"A small body of individuals have sworn that the large cats and the hairy humanoids – when spotted by the astonished and sometimes terrified onlookers – vanished before their eyes. We're not talking about them making hasty getaways into the woods. Rather, we are talking about the 'animals' – in an instant – **changing form from big cat and Bigfoot to a small, brightly-lit globe of light**."*

On the page here we have this headline: "UFO Activity Ongoing in Pennsylvania- Encounters with Small Spheres of Light Close to the Ground Increasing-August 13, 2022." We read the following:

"*What I consider to be even more fascinating are **the increase in reports of smaller generally spherical objects** that are low to the ground and reportedly have been approaching within feet of witnesses in some cases. These encounters with mini-UFOs as I have called them for many years, are taking place in daylight as well as during the night."*

The author reports that the objects range in size from a few inches to about a foot or two in diameter. He says, "In some cases, the objects appear to be solid metal, however **most witnesses describe these objects as luminous globes of various colors**."

Page 194 of the Volume 2 of *Phantasms of the Living* tells us this:

*"In another, **a luminous ball was seen in a corner of the room**. A fourth very remarkable instance, of the brilliant illumination and then sudden darkening of an*

- Black Holes (5)
- body double (1)
- body enhancements (2)
- body transplants (2)
- Boltzmann brain (2)
- books by Mark Mahin (4)
- boondoggle (5)
- bouncing universe (1)
- brain (46)
- brain experiments (2)
- brain imaging (3)
- brain paradoxes (4)
- brain replacement (2)
- brain research (7)
- brain scanning (3)
- brain stimulation (1)
- Brane cosmology (1)
- c-value paradox (1)
- Cambrian Explosion (5)
- candid quotes of scientists (1)
- car culture (1)
- cell division (1)
- cell reproduction (1)
- cell types (2)
- cells (7)
- certainty (1)
- channeling (1)
- chatbots (2)
- ChatGPT (1)
- China (2)
- Christmas (1)
- cinema technology (1)
- clairvoyance (17)
- cloning (1)
- coincidences (3)
- common ancestry (1)
- complexity (3)
- component interdependence (1)
- computationalism (3)
- computer simulations (3)
- conformity (2)
- consciousness (36)
- consumption (5)
- continuous transcendent dependency (1)
- coronavirus (13)
- cosmic acceleration (2)
- cosmic background radiation (4)
- cosmic destiny (2)

empty room, is described to us by the Rev. Edward Ram, of Norwich, as a personal experience of himself and his wife — but this was in a house where other unaccountable phenomena have been observed; as was also the case in a fifth instance, where a light is described by one percipient, Mrs. W. B. Richmond, as a glow over the whole room, out of which (according to her recollection) ***two bright little balls of light seemed to flash out****; and by the other (her mother) as ' flickering about' specially in a particular part of the room. In none of these cases does it seem possible that the light was in any way cast or reflected into the room from outside."*

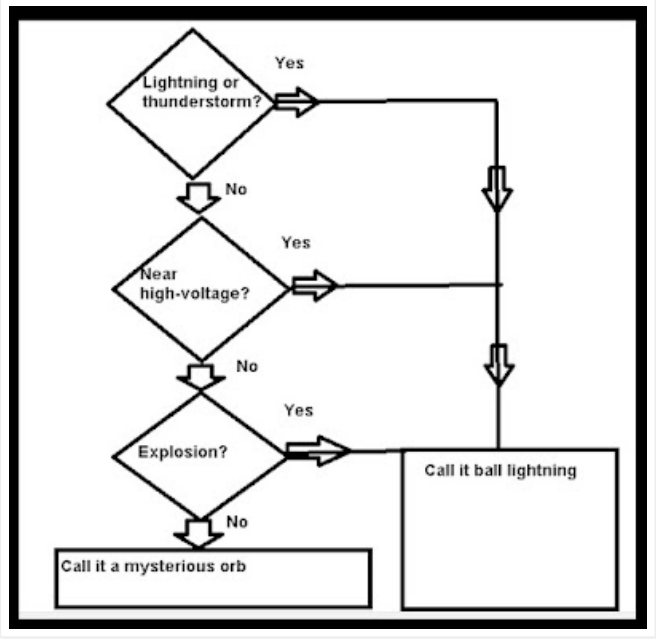
I have very many additional accounts of this type, which I will include (over the next 12 days) in a Part 2, Part 3 and Part 4 of this series, each of which will be as long as this post. There are many cases of mysterious orbs seen during thunderstorms or lightning storms and called "ball lightning." But none of the cases I have cited or will cite in this series are orbs seen during thunderstorms or lightning storms. Some papers reporting the sightings of mysterious orbs outside of thunderstorms or lightning storms will use the term "ball lightning," but such a term seems to be inappropriate whenever neither thunder nor normal lightning is observed. An example is the paper "Ball Lightning and Strange Phenomena in the Po Plain Valley (Near Rovigo, Italy)." We read that for "many years" a scientific research group has reported seeing two types of light phenomena: (1) bubbles of yellow-orange light about two meters in diameter, and (2) red floating spheres about two meters wide, lasting between seconds and minutes. There is no claim that such things were observed only or mainly during lightning storms or thunderstorms, and only in one case was the group able to pick up an anomalous electrical reading. The authors resort to implausible speculating about a "possible relationship with lunar cycles" and that "the Anomalous Luminous phenomena in the Po Valley may be related to tectonic activity."

A scientific paper entitled "The Ball Lightning Controversy – Empirical Case Studies " states this:

"The main observational and object parameters of six national BL [ball lightning] datasets show more similarities than differences. Although their BL data come from places 3,000 km distant with different climatic conditions, basic features like thunderstorm association, duration, distance from observer, size, color and brightness form a cluster with defined range. ***One out of three BL events happen indoors*** *with a wide spectrum of possible object relations. 30-50% of the objects terminate with an audible explosion."*

- cosmic evolution (2)
- cosmic fine tuning (56)
- cosmic habitability (5)
- cosmic history (1)
- cosmic inflation (26)
- cosmic layers (1)
- cosmic life-force (1)
- cosmic message (1)
- cosmic mysteries (10)
- cosmic religion (1)
- cosmic structure (3)
- cosmic wonder (1)
- cosmological constant (4)
- cosmological natural selection (4)
- cosmology (95)
- COVID-19 (15)
- cryonics (2)
- crystal gazing (1)
- cyborg (1)
- cyclical universe (5)
- dark energy (8)
- dark genome (1)
- dark matter (27)
- Darwinism (55)
- data dredging (1)
- dating (1)
- de-extinction (1)
- deathbed mist or lights (2)
- deathbed vision (8)
- definition of religion (1)
- definition of science (1)
- dehumanization (2)
- dematerialization (1)
- depression (1)
- developmental biology (8)
- diet (1)
- direct voice phenomenon (1)
- disasters (1)
- disease prevention (1)
- disintegrating asteroid (1)
- DNA (24)
- DNA divergence of humans and chimpanzees (1)
- dogs (1)
- double standards in science (3)
- doubt (1)
- dowsing (1)
- dreams (22)
- drones (1)
- DUNE (1)

There is no basis for calling mysterious transparent or glowing balls observed indoors "ball lightning." Lightning is not an indoor phenomena. It would seem that the author quoted above is conflating different phenomena, trying to call diverse types of phenomena "ball lightning." None of the very many reports that I cite in this four-part series will be reports of something terminating with an explosion or reports of something occurring during thunder storms or lightning storms. Below is a flowchart giving a reasonable algorithm to follow in classifying such reports of mysterious ball-shaped phenomena:



A page in *The Encyclopedia of Strange and Unexplained Physical Phenomena* describes a red orb passing through a closed window. We hear no mention of a thunder storm or lightning storm:

"In the summer of 1960, as Louise Matthews of South Philadelphia, Pennsylvania lay on her living room couch, she looked up to see ***a huge red ball coming through a window and the Venetian blinds, both closed and neither damaged in any way*** *by the object's passage. When the ball, which was making a sizzling sound, passed by her, Mrs. Matthews felt a tingling on the back of her neck...The ball went through the living room and into the dining room, exiting -- again without damage -- through a closed window. She called her husband, who came home from work to find the back of her hand burned. The hair at the back of the head fell out, leaving the skin there as smooth as that in the front of her face."*

Was this ball lightning? Lightning is electricity, and glass is an electrical insulator, not a conductor. Glass stops electricity, just

- dwarf galaxies (1)
- dwarf galaxy rotation anomaly (1)
- dystopia (1)
- early habitability epoch (1)
- early Universe (2)
- earthlights (1)
- easy life hypothesis (3)
- education (3)
- elections (1)
- electromagnetic pulse attack (1)
- electromagnetism (4)
- electrons (3)
- EmDrive (1)
- emergence (1)
- EMP (1)
- end of the world (5)
- energy crisis (3)
- energy forecast (1)
- energy production (2)
- engrams (12)
- entropy (3)
- environmental degradation (5)
- epigenetics (1)
- ESP (74)
- esthetics (1)
- Ethics (10)
- Europa (2)
- evolution (86)
- evolution poll (1)
- experts (12)
- extended evolutionary synthesis (1)
- extent of Darwinist belief (1)
- extent of paranormal abilities (1)
- extent of paranormal beliefs (2)
- extent of paranormal experience (3)
- exteriorization of sensibility (1)
- extrasolar planets (8)
- extraterrestrial life (58)
- extraterrestrials (36)
- faint young sun paradox (3)
- fast radio bursts (1)
- fate of the universe (1)
- Fermi's paradox (8)
- fine-tuned universe (7)
- Flynn effect (1)
- forecasting (1)

as rubber does. The rule about lightning and glass is that lightning will only pass through a closed window if it shatters the glass. So it would seem to make no sense to call such a sighting ball lightning.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:26 AM No comments:

Labels: angels, orbs, paranormal phenomena, spiritual manifestations

Sunday, May 21, 2023

600 Dreams I Had About the Deceased

In the memorable movie *The Sixth Sense*, there is a famous line in which a young boy says, "I see dead people." If that boy was the "I see dead people" guy, I guess you can call me the "I dream dead people" guy. Below are about 600 dreams I have had about the deceased since November 2020:

- 104 dreams involving my late mother.
- 103 dreams involving my late father.
- 31 dreams involving my late sister, the first-born of my siblings.
- 13 dreams (after her death) of another late sister, the last-born of my siblings.
- Three dreams involving one of my late grandmothers.
- Five dreams involving my late grandfather on my mother's side.
- One dream involving a late grandfather mentioned only as "Grandpa."
- A dream involving my late sister-in-law, who lived outside of the US.
- A dream involving a late relative named Ursula.
- A dream involving a late aunt of mine.
- Many dreams in which I saw pets I had previously had, who died (with me sometimes stroking such pets).
- A dream in which I heard the late Karen Carpenter singing "For All We Know."
- Three dreams involving the late actor Richard Burton.
- Three dreams involving the late actress Elizabeth Taylor.
- A dream involving the late actor Peter Lorre.
- A dream involving the late actor Jack Larson.
- A dream involving the late actor Sidney Poitier.
- A dream involving the later actor Jack Lemmon.
- A dream involving the later singer and actress Carmen Miranda.
- A dream involving the late singer Whitney Houston.

- Fourth Dimension (1)
- free will (3)
- functional threshold (2)
- fundamental constants (6)
- fundamental forces (5)
- funerals (1)
- future contrasts (2)
- future entertainment (2)
- future eras (1)
- future happiness (2)
- future movies (1)
- future of consciousness (2)
- future of man (19)
- future problems (4)
- future risks (2)
- future technology (11)
- future weapons (1)
- futurology (2)
- galactic empire (1)
- galaxies (7)
- galaxy formation (7)
- galaxy spin anomaly (1)
- gamma ray bursts (2)
- gaslighting (1)
- genes (17)
- genetic engineering (17)
- genetics (13)
- geoengineering (2)
- ghosts (29)
- global consciousness project (2)
- global food supply (5)
- global organizing activity of a life-force (GOAL) (4)
- global risks (1)
- global warming (22)
- GMO (3)
- God (2)
- gradualism (2)
- grand unification theories (1)
- Great Filter (2)
- grey goo (1)
- groupthink (6)
- habitable zone (1)
- hallucinogenic drugs (1)
- happiness (1)
- heart attack risk (1)
- heritability of intelligence (1)
- hierarchy problem (1)
- Higgs mass (1)
- higher dimension (1)
- holographs (1)

- A dream involving the late actor Dan Blocker.
- A dream involving the late actress Greer Garson.
- A dream involving the late hi-tech executive Steve Jobs.
- Two dreams involving the late singer and composer John Denver.
- Two dreams involving the late actor Burt Reynolds.
- A dream involving the late German poet Hans Sachs.
- A dream involving the late dancer, actor and director Gene Kelly.
- A dream involving the late architect Frank Lloyd Wright.
- A dream involving the late actor George Peppard.
- Three dreams involving the late actress Lucille Ball (in one I could see her very vividly, almost like she was standing in front of me).
- A dream involving the late actor George Kennedy.
- Three dreams involving the late US president George Washington.
- A dream involving the late singer/actor Bing Crosby.
- A dream involving the late composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim.
- A dream involving the late Icelandic medium Indridi Indridason.
- A dream involving the late singer Peggy Lee.
- A dream involving the late actor James Coburn.
- A dream involving the late actor Lee J. Cobb.
- A dream involving the late actor Sean Connery.
- Two dreams involving the late actor Paul Newman.
- Two dreams involving the late composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.
- A dream involving the late composer Ludwig van Beethoven.
- Six dreams involving the late singer and actor Mario Lanza.
- A dream involving the late senator Barry Goldwater.
- One dream involving the late labor organizer Cesar Chavez.
- Three dreams involving the late US president Richard Nixon.
- One dream involving the late senator and vice-president Hubert Humphrey.
- Two dreams involving the late US senator George McGovern.

- homeopathy (2)
- homochirality (2)
- homosexuality (3)
- how to test telepathy using family members (1)
- human body plan (1)
- human extinction (2)
- human history (1)
- human intelligence (4)
- human knowledge (1)
- hurricanes (1)
- hypermnesia (1)
- hyperthymesia (2)
- hypnotic trance (17)
- idealism (4)
- ideological regimes (1)
- immortality (3)
- inflation theory (6)
- information (1)
- integrated information theory (1)
- intelligent design (2)
- interplanetary travel (1)
- interstellar colonization (3)
- interstellar communication (1)
- interstellar travel (9)
- Iraq war (1)
- K2-18 b (1)
- Kepler Space Telescope (2)
- Kepler-78b (1)
- ketamine (1)
- Kirlian photography (1)
- lambda cold dark matter theory (5)
- language acquisition (2)
- Large Hadron Collider (2)
- laws of nature (6)
- LCDM theory (1)
- leisure (1)
- levitation (21)
- life after death (72)
- life extension (8)
- Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment (1)
- Mad Scientist (1)
- Many Worlds theory (6)
- Mars (18)
- Mars lights (4)
- Mars strange objects (8)
- materialism (8)
- materialism as religion (2)
- materialization (11)

- A dream involving the late actor Robert Culp.
- A dream involving the late US senator John McCain.
- A dream involving the late actor James Mason.
- A dream involving the late commedian and director Dick Martin.
- A dream involving the late US president Grover Cleveland.
- Three dreams involving the late singer and actress Doris Day.
- A dream involving the late actor and director Jerry Lewis.
- Two dreams referring to the late composer Richard Wagner.
- Two dreams involving the late composer Peter Tchaikovsky.
- Seven dreams involving the late president Ronald Reagan.
- Four dreams involving a famous deceased political leader I won't mention.
- Nine dreams involving the late actor Peter Falk.
- Five dreams involving the late talk show host Johnny Carson.
- Five dreams involving the late actor Leonard Nimoy.
- Three dreams involving the late actor Laurence Olivier.
- A dream involving the late actor Michael Landon.
- Two dreams involving the late singer Perry Como.
- A dream involving the late US president Theodore Roosevelt.
- A dream involving the late baseball player Ted Williams.
- A dream involving the late actor Richard Deacon.
- A dream involving the late Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh.
- A dream involving the late actor/dancer Fred Astaire.
- Two dreams involving the late baseball player Babe Ruth.
- A dream involving the late singer James Brown.
- A dream involving the late painter Rembrandt.
- Two dreams involving the late Princess Diana.
- Three dreams involving the late US president Lyndon Johnson, and one dream involving his late wife.
- Two dreams involving the late US senator Robert Kennedy.

- mathematical universe hypothesis (1)
- mathematics (2)
- matter antimatter asymmetry (1)
- meat consumption (1)
- medical care in old age (1)
- medical technology (2)
- mediums (33)
- mega-tsunami (1)
- memory (44)
- memory implant (1)
- memory retrieval (4)
- memory traces (16)
- mental differences between animals and humans (1)
- meta-analysis (1)
- meteor (1)
- methodological naturalism (1)
- Miller-Urey experiment (1)
- mind (7)
- mind linking (1)
- mind over matter (6)
- mind uploading (5)
- mind-reading (4)
- miracles (2)
- missing heritability problem (1)
- missing specifications problem (1)
- misspeaking scientists (1)
- molecular biology (8)
- molecular machinery (2)
- MOND (1)
- morphic gravitation (1)
- morphogen gradient (1)
- morphogenesis (20)
- multiverse (28)
- mutations (1)
- mysterious raps (10)
- mystery of existence (1)
- nanotechnology (1)
- NASA (14)
- natural history (4)
- natural history museums (1)
- natural selection (31)
- naturalism (2)
- nature (2)
- near death experience (31)
- near-death experience (2)
- Neptune (1)
- neuroscience (51)

- A dream involving the late US senator Edward Kennedy.
- Three dreams involving the late opera singer Luciano Pavoratti.
- Four dreams involving the late actor John Wayne.
- Two dreams involving the late actor Jimmy Stewart.
- A dream referring to the late musician Benny Goodman, mentioning "the King of Swing," which is what people called him.
- A dream mentioning a very famous historical figure born in ancient times.
- Four dreams involving the late actor Gregory Peck.
- A dream involving the late actor Dudley Moore.
- A dream involving the late US president Franklin Roosevelt.
- A dream involving the late actor Raymond Burr.
- Two dreams involving the late evangelist Billy Graham.
- Three dreams involving the late Albert Einstein.
- Two dreams involving the late Neil Armstrong.
- A dream involving the late actor William Holden.
- A dream involving the late poet Lord Byron.
- A dream involving the late Carrie Fisher.
- Two dreams involving the late William Shakespeare.
- Eleven dreams involving the late US president John Kennedy.
- Two dreams involving the late Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.
- A dream involving the Beatles (two of whom are deceased).
- Three dreams involving the late actor Marlon Brando.
- A dream involving the late theorist Immanuel Velikovsky.
- A dream involving the later actor Charlton Heston.
- A dream involving the late explorer Christopher Columbus.
- A dream involving the late US president Gerald Ford.
- Eleven dreams involving the late composer and singer John Lennon.
- Twelve dreams involving the late composer and singer George Harrison.
- A dream involving the late director and actor Charlie Chaplin.

- neutrino (2)
- neutron (1)
- neutron stars (1)
- Nobel Prize (3)
- non-local consciousness (1)
- nonearthly pre-existence of the soul (1)
- nonneuralism (1)
- nuclear energy (2)
- nuclear war (5)
- nuclear weapons (1)
- nucleosynthesis (3)
- observer selection effect (1)
- ocean acidifcation (1)
- oceanic disperal (1)
- optogenetics (1)
- orbs (21)
- organelles (1)
- origin of biological complexity (38)
- origin of elements (2)
- origin of flying animals (3)
- origin of genes (2)
- origin of genetic doe (1)
- origin of language (7)
- origin of life (51)
- origin of man (16)
- origin of Mind (15)
- origin of multicellular life (2)
- origin of protein complexes (1)
- origin of proteins (3)
- origin of sex (1)
- origin of sexual reproduction (1)
- origin of universe (2)
- out-of-body experience (12)
- overblown hype (67)
- overconfidence (9)
- overconsumption (9)
- overpopulation (9)
- overshoot and collapse (1)
- p-hacking (1)
- P/2013 R3 (1)
- paleontology (8)
- pandemic (2)
- panpsychism (4)
- panspermia (4)
- paradoxes (1)
- parallel universes (3)
- paranormal healing (2)
- paranormal phenomena (242)

- Two dreams referring to the late physicist Isaac Newton.
- A dream referring to the deceased founders of a large company.
- A dream referring to the late philosopher Rousseau.
- A dream involving the late scientist and writer Benjamin Franklin.
- A dream involving the late scientist Antoine Lavoisier.
- Four dreams referring to the late biologist Darwin.
- A dream involving the late actor/celebrity Orson Bean.
- A dream involving the late actor John Garfield.
- A dream involving the late actor Robert Mitchum.
- Five dreams involving the late opera singer Franco Corelli.
- A dream involving the late actor Jimmy Cagney.
- Two dreams involving the late psychologist and ESP researcher Joseph Rhine.
- Four dreams involving the late science fiction writer and futurist Arthur C. Clarke.
- A dream involving the late commentator Rush Limbaugh.
- A dream referring to a biographer of English poets, probably a reference to the late biographer Samuel Johnson.
- A dream involving the late novelist George Orwell.
- A dream involving the late Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev.
- A dream involving the late medium Margaret Fox.
- Four dreams involving the late film director Stanley Kubrick.
- A dream that was probably a reference to the late novelist Victor Hugo (ta dream in which some man gave me Hugo's novel *Les Miserables*).
- A dream involving the late actress Diahann Carroll.
- Three dreams involving the late actress Natalie Wood.
- A dream involving the late talk show host Tom Snyder.
- A dream involving the late actor Walter Pidgeon.
- Two dreams involving the late actress Betty White.
- A dream involving the late actress Marilyn Monroe.
- A dream involving the late actor R. Lee Ermey.
- A dream involving the late writer Jules Verne.
- A dream involving the late philosopher Plato.
- A dream involving the late writer James Joyce.
- A dream involving the late actor Danny Kaye.

- paranormal writing (1)
- paraverse (2)
- pareidolia (2)
- particle collisions (1)
- particle physics (15)
- peak coal (3)
- peak oil (5)
- peer review (1)
- phantom events (1)
- philosophical zombie (1)
- philosophy (33)
- philosophy of mind (20)
- philosophy of science (3)
- photography (2)
- phylogenetics (1)
- physicalism (2)
- physics (22)
- pigs (1)
- planetoids (1)
- plant intelligence (1)
- Platonism (1)
- polls (1)
- pollution (4)
- poltergeist (2)
- polygamy (1)
- pork eating (1)
- post-scarcity economy (1)
- pre-1975 near-death experience (15)
- pre-1975 out-of-body experience (1)
- precognition (26)
- predictions (4)
- primordial fluctuations (1)
- primordial singularity (1)
- problem of evil (6)
- prognostication (2)
- programmed material universe (8)
- protein complexes (1)
- protein complexity (3)
- protein evolution (5)
- protein folding (9)
- protein localization (1)
- protein molecules (7)
- protein sensitivity (1)
- psychiatry (1)
- psychokinesis (8)
- psychology experiments (1)
- psychometry (5)
- pulsars (1)
- qigong (2)

- A dream involving the late US Supreme Court judge Ruth Ginsburg.
- Two dreams involving the late actor Jim Garner.
- A dream involving the late actor Fernand Gravey, mirroring a scene in a 1938 movie in which Gravey was humming a Johann Strauss melody (interestingly, I could not recall the melody the morning after having the dream, but it played exactly right in my dream).
- Two dreams involving the late actor Christopher Reeve.
- Five dreams referring to the late singer/actor Elvis Presley.
- A dream involving the late actor Richard Basehart.
- A dream involving the late philosopher John Stuart Mill.
- Four dreams involving the late actor Cary Grant.
- A dream involving the late actor Eddie Albert.
- A dream involving the late actor Andy Griffith.
- A dream involving the late actor Fred MacMurray.
- Two dreams involving the late civil rights champion Martin Luther King.
- Five dreams involving the late singer/actor Frank Sinatra.
- A dream involving the late composer Franz Shubert.
- A dream involving the late composer Robert Schumann.
- Two dreams involving the late singer/actor Dean Martin.
- A dream involving the late singer Bobby Darin.
- A dream involving the late writer Voltaire.
- Two dream involving the late TV and movie executive Carl Reiner.
- A vivid dream involving the late actress Audrey Hepburn.
- A dream involving the late actress Kathryn Hepburn.
- A dream involving the late composer/conductor Leonard Bernstein.
- Three dreams involving the late US president Thomas Jefferson.
- A dream involving the late actor Leslie Nielsen.
- Three dreams involving the late actor Roger Moore.
- Two dreams involving the late dictator Saddam Hussein.

- quantum biology (3)
- quantum computer universe (1)
- quantum gravity (1)
- quantum mechanics (7)
- quasar polarization vector alignments (1)
- quasars (1)
- questionable research practices (3)
- racism (1)
- radical abundance (1)
- random universes (2)
- randomness (2)
- receptacle theory of consciousness (3)
- recolonization of Earth (1)
- recommended books (15)
- Reddit (1)
- reductionism (6)
- reincarnation (6)
- rejuvenation (3)
- remote viewing (7)
- replication crisis (5)
- requirements underestimation (6)
- resource depletion (5)
- retrocognition (1)
- RNA world hypothesis (1)
- robotics (3)
- robots (14)
- rogue planet (1)
- savants (4)
- scarcity (1)
- science and ethics (3)
- science and religion (2)
- science education (1)
- science fiction (111)
- Science fiction stories (127)
- science fiction story (124)
- science journalism (22)
- science textbooks (1)
- scientific authoritarianism (2)
- scientific consensus (4)
- scientific ethics (2)
- scientific explanation (2)
- scientific explanations (7)
- scientific fraud (1)
- scientific literature (2)
- scientific process (8)
- scientific speculation (9)
- scientific theories (6)

- Four dreams involving the late actor James Gandolfini.
- Two dreams involving the late singer Sammy Davis Jr.
- A dream involving the late singer Peggy Lee.
- Three dreams involving the later actor Robin Williams.
- A dream involving the late actor Martin Milner.
- A dream involving the late TV host Allen Ludden.
- A dream involving the late actor Burgess Meredith.
- A dream involving the late gangster Al Capone.
- A dream involving the late actor and comedian Bob Saget.
- A dream involving the late actress Anissa Jones.
- A dream involving the late actress Angela Lansbury.
- A dream involving the late evangelist Oral Roberts.
- A dream involving the later director and writer Joshua Logan.
- A dream involving the late US senator John Warner.
- A dream involving the late actor William Frawley.
- A dream involving the late US general Douglas MacArther.
- A dream involving the late German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer.
- A dream involving the late poet P. S. Shelley.
- A dream involving the late actress Valerie Harper (one in which I improbably remembered that she had been fired, a recollection matching her firing from a TV role in 1987).
- A dream of the scene in the movie *Patton* in which General George Patton (played by George C. Scott) was hearing about the famous "Nuts!" reply of General Anthony McAuliffe (the dream therefore managed to refer to three deceased people, Patton, Scott and McAuliffe).
- Two other dreams involving Patton, one mentioning the late actors Lee Marvin and Robert Ryan.
- A dream that may have mentioned the ancient Greek urban planner Hippodamus, a name I had never heard mentioned before the night of the dream (I wrote down the name "Hippodemus" after having the dream).
- Four dreams involving the late US president Dwight Eisenhower. (In the last dream Eisenhower was saying that people from Texas could be good

- scientific theory (5)
- scientific thinking (1)
- scientism (1)
- scientist flubs and flops (image series) (8)
- scientist misconduct (10)
- scientist overconfidence (1)
- scientist recklessness (1)
- scientist specialization (1)
- scientist subculture (2)
- self (1)
- self-consciousness (2)
- sensationalism (1)
- sensitivity of proteins (1)
- SETI (19)
- sex (1)
- sexism (1)
- shared death experience (2)
- shopping (1)
- short radio bursts (1)
- simulated universe (6)
- Singularity (8)
- skepticism (9)
- slate writing (2)
- slavery (1)
- sleepwalking (2)
- social media (1)
- social security (1)
- social trends (1)
- sociology of science (25)
- software development (5)
- solar flares (1)
- solar system (1)
- soul (4)
- space colonization (2)
- space exploration (3)
- space station (2)
- spirit photography (1)
- spiritism (1)
- spiritual manifestations (23)
- spiritualism (19)
- sports of the future (1)
- STARGATE program (1)
- starships (1)
- stem cells (1)
- string theory (8)
- subsidies (1)
- sun (1)
- supercomputer (3)
- superintelligence (7)
- supermen (2)
- supernovae (2)

presidents. I was not aware when having the dream that Eisenhower was born in Texas.)

- A dream involving the late US president George H. W. Bush.
- A dream involving the late character actress Alice Ghostley (oddly, I had never learned her name prior to having the dream).
- Seven dreams involving Jesus.
- A dream involving the late actress Charlotte Rae.
- Two dreams involving a late professor Bernard F. Riess.
- A dream involving the late United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld.
- A dream involving the late medium Laura Edmonds.
- A dream on February 20, 2021 involving the late actor Edd Byrnes.

Last night I had a dream that ended with a teacher telling me, "Call Laura Edmonds." I recognized the name after waking up. Laura Edmonds (the daughter of John W. Edmonds) was a medium, one of the most astonishing figures in the history of the anomalous.

In Volume 2 of the 1855 work *Spiritualism* by Judge John W. Edmonds (who served as Chief Justice of the New York State Supreme Court), we have a remarkable account of a psychic who is not named. Edmonds says he will give "a brief account of one medium whose whole progress I have witnessed with intense interest."

First we are told the woman developed powers of clairvoyance. We hear a reference to the sea disaster in which more than 300 people on the SS Arctic died in 1854:

"Since then this faculty of knowing things at a distance has greatly improved. She saw the wreck of the Arctic when it was occurring. She saw and detailed with great accuracy, as subsequent accounts showed, the recent collision on the Canada Railroad, and that a few moments after it happened, and while the dead and wounded were being lifted out of the ruins. She has seen and described the state of things at Sebastopol and its vicinity, and she has frequently described scenes and conversations going on at the moment, at the distance of several hundred miles from her ; and all this, not when she was in a trance, but in a state of mental consciousness to all around her."

The account gets even stranger when we are told that the woman could speak in languages she never learned:

- superstition (1)
- supersymmetry (11)
- surveillance state (1)
- synapse theory of memory (7)
- synchronicity (1)
- syncing speech in twins (1)
- table turning (5)
- taxes (1)
- technological innovations (1)
- telekinesis (1)
- teleology (12)
- teleophobia (1)
- telepathy (14)
- teleportation (5)
- theism (3)
- theories of mind (7)
- theories of the future (3)
- theories of the universe (4)
- theories of time (3)
- theories of truth (1)
- theory of accelerating progress (1)
- theory of consciousness (8)
- things science cannot explain (5)
- third man factor (1)
- time dilation (1)
- time travel (3)
- tininess of human knowledge (21)
- top-down theory of mind (1)
- trance phenomena (2)
- transfiguration (1)
- Transhumanism (4)
- transposition of the senses (8)
- Twitter (1)
- types of universes (2)
- UAP (4)
- UFO (14)
- UFOs (25)
- underdetermination of scientific theory (1)
- universe (8)
- unsolved problems of biology (4)
- unsolved problems of science (3)
- vacuum (3)
- vacuum catastrophe (3)
- vegetarianism (2)
- Venus (1)
- Venus colonization (1)

"She next became developed to speak different languages. She knows no language but her own, and a little smattering of boarding-school French. Yet she has spoken in nine or ten different tongues, sometimes for an hour at a time, with the ease and fluency of a native. It is not unfrequent that foreigners converse with their spirit-friends through her in their own language. A recent instance occurred where a Greek gentleman had several interviews, and for several hours at a time carried on the conversation on his part in Greek, and received his answers sometimes in that language and sometimes in English ; yet until then she had never heard a word of modern Greek spoken. About the same time her musical powers became developed. She has repeatedly sang in foreign languages, such as Italian, In- dian, German, and Polish."

On the same page we get this remarkable claim:

"Her next advance was to see spirits and spiritual scenes, and now scarcely a day passes that she does not describe the spirits who are present, entire strangers to her, yet very readily recognized and identified by their inquiring friends. This has of late been witnessed by very many persons, and many an, unbeliever in spiritual intercourse has been overwhelmed with the evidence of identity which thus by sight and by communion has been presented."

On this page of a book by another author, we read that this woman was a daughter of Judge Edmonds: Laura Edmonds.

"Miss Laura Edmonds, a daughter of the Judge, also pursued her researches in the same direction, and became developed as an excellent medium for trance speaking, the discerning of spirits, the gift of tongues, including several dead and living languages utterly unknown to herself, the ability to travel clairvoyantly to distant places, and communicate with absent friends by the mental telegraph."

How strange that last night I had a dream telling me to "call Laura Edmonds," when Laura Edmonds was a figure reported to have such astonishing powers of contacting the dead. Just after having the dream, I went into my bathroom, where I again saw something very spooky I have seen about 12 times in the past year.

Below we see the electrical outlet in the bathroom next to where I sleep. It is a modern-type GFCI outlet that normally shows a green light, except when the circuit is broken. The outlet is about 13 inches above the bathroom's toilet, which is an inch away from the wall containing the outlet. When I go the bathroom in the middle of the night, I see the green light very clearly, because it is the only light source in the bathroom. I

- videos (17)
- virtual reality (2)
- vitalism (6)
- von Neumann probes (2)
- voting (1)
- water memory (1)
- wealth inequality (4)
- weddings (1)
- white holes (1)
- wormhole (1)
- xenoglossy (4)

don't turn on the regular light in the bathroom when I use the bathroom in the middle of the night, because I have heard that turning on a full light in the middle of the night will make it more difficult for you to fall back to sleep.

Just after awaking from the dream about the late medium Laura Edmonds, I saw the green light above mysteriously turn off and then turn back on about two seconds later. I have seen this happen about 12 times during the year I have lived at my current location.

To read more about my dreams, which include 300+ dreams seeming to refer to life after death, see my post here, which I have been updating almost daily for two years.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:17 AM No comments:

Labels: dreams, ESP, paranormal phenomena, xenoglossy

Thursday, March 30, 2023

They Claimed Permanent Physical Evidence of the Paranormal

It is amazing how successful the mainstream has been in limiting the public's knowledge of some of the main types of paranormal phenomena. One of the main types of paranormal phenomena is called materialization. Materialization is the alleged appearance of physical objects in a way that defies all explanation. You will read accounts describing such a phenomenon very often in the literature of the paranormal. But mainstream sources will scarcely say a word about such a topic. So when the average person reads an account of paranormal materialization, he will be extremely surprised. It's kind of the situation that would exist if scientists had a taboo against discussing meteors, leading to a state where anyone who discussed meteor sightings might sound like some fantasist.

Phenomena of materialization are discussed in my posts below:

(1) The case of the "Katie King" materialization produced by Florence Cook is discussed here, a case involving many observations made by the world-class scientist William Crookes.

(2) Various observations of materialization are discussed here and here.

(3) The case of very many materializations observed in the presence of the medium Marthe Beraud (referred to in a book as Eva C.) is discussed here.

(4) Materialization reports by the distinguished science Alfred Russel Wallace (co-founder of the theory of evolution) are discussed here.

(5) Materialization reports by the 19th century writer Emily Katherine Bates and the 20th century professor C. J. Ducasse are described here.

One of the best examples of evidence for materialization is the 1922 book "Materialisations-Experimente mit M. Franek-Kluski" by physician Gustave Geley and Albert von Schrenck-Notzing M.D. The title can be translated as "Materialization Experiments with M. Franek-Kluski." The book is in German, but with the help of Google Translate it is fairly easy to get an English translation of any page.

After giving some background information about M. Franek-Kluski (a male medium), on page 19 the book mentions getting permanent physical evidence of a materialization: "Now indeed we obtained casts of materialized hands, a process of an extremely delicate nature since it requires a complete materialization of the organ, that of the momentary creation of a human living hand."

Witnesses said that during materialization a full human-like form may appear. During the materializations reported to occur from Florence Cook, the result was a full human form (referred to as Katie King) that might even appear to walk around. On page 24 the authors give this interesting discussion of how such materialization looks to the eye:

'The process by which materializations come about is well known today, since it is known that the materialized organs and tissues are formed at the expense of a primordial substance, which is formed largely by the medium and also to a lesser extent by those present. The primordial substance appears mainly in two forms: as a solid or liquid substance or in gaseous form. In the experiments with Eva C., the solid

substance prevailed. The opposite is the case for the majority of other well-known media. The primordial substance almost always develops in a gaseous form or as a vapor, the solid matter was observed only exceptionally in Franek's case. In general, the phenomena take place as follows: First, a strong smell of ozone is noticed....This announcing symptom was never absent from our experiments. The smell comes on suddenly and goes away as well. One sees (in very dim light) faintly phosphorescent vapors, a kind of fog around the medium hover, especially above his head. This fog gradually rises higher like light smoke. At the same time lights appear, apparently foci of compaction. These were generally numerous, delicate, and fleeting, but sometimes they showed themselves to be stronger and more permanent, and gave the impression of luminous parts of otherwise invisible organs, especially the fingertips and parts of the face. Finally, when materialization was complete, fully formed hands or faces, often self-luminous, were seen, as were sometimes the materialized tissues. As is well known, M. le Cour compared the formation of these structures, materialized from a phosphorescent mist, with the formation of the celestial bodies from mists."

On page 20 the authors note methods they took to rule out any trickery such as perhaps someone pulling out of his clothing some object that might be mistaken for a materialized form. We read this:

"The medium sat on a simple chair in front of the black cabinet, the curtains of which generally remain open behind him... Actually, a cabinet seemed superfluous to Franek. ***The control under these circumstances was very simplified, for it essentially consisted in the holding of Franek's two hands by two experimenters, one on his right and the other on his left.*** *The contact between the experimenters and the medium was also secured by the knees and legs in such a way that Franek could not make any movement without being noticed."*

We read on the next page and the page after it of some facts making it hard to imagine the medium smuggling in some foot-sized or hand-sized items to be used in trickery:

"We never undressed the medium. The reader will understand that such a means of control was not appropriate for Franek. However, several times before and after the sessions, unexpected medical examinations of the medium gave me the opportunity to examine his body closely without ever seeing anything suspicious... Franek was in the habit, for reasons of convenience, of emptying his pockets completely before meetings. The clothes hung on his body without showing a

bulge....The best sleight of hand would have felt powerless if he had been put in the same position that Franek found himself in during the sessions: in an unprepared room to which he had not been permitted access in the meantime, without the possibility of assistance and both hands immobile!"

Under such conditions, the witnesses reported observing gradual materializations of what looked like human limbs, accompanied by dramatic mysterious luminous phenomena such as reported for the December 27 session: "nebulae, phosphorescent haze, bright luminous points, large luminous spheres, etc."

On page 36 the authors discuss a method they used to obtain permanent physical evidence of materialization, using paraffin (a type of hot wax):

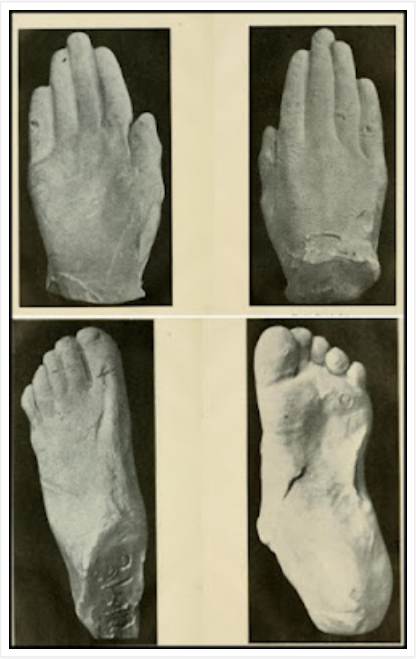
"The paraffin casts are obtained as follows: A bucket containing molten paraffin floating on warm water is placed next to the medium during the session. The materialized 'being' is now asked to dip a hand, foot, or even part of its face into the paraffin one or more times. A mold is then immediately formed on the limb, which hardens immediately in the air or when immersed in cold water standing nearby. The organ in question then dematerializes and leaves the glove to the experimenter. Later you can pour plaster of paris into the glove and then get rid of the paraffin by placing the mold in boiling water. What remains is a plaster cast showing all the details of the materialization. We used this method but did not use the cold water to set the molds for simplicity and to ensure control."

On page 58 we have this remarkable account, which may be of great interest to anyone getting mysterious orbs in photos:

"I asked him if he could see my sister in the 'Astral' who has been dead for 3 years. Answer: Yes. At the same moment I felt a woman's hand gently placed on my forehead, making the sign of the cross there and encircling it with a circle, as my sister always did when she was alive when she said goodbye to me. I recognized her hand, dimly lit, against the edge of the fluorescent screen that lay on the table in front of me. It moved several times before my eyes, and more and more I thought I recognized it. She squeezed my hand, patted my face. I can no longer doubt that it is her hand that I feel. A short time later ***a glowing orb forms in front of my face*** *and moves away; then she comes very close to my face and to my great astonishment and also to my great joy* ***I notice the fully recognizable facial features of my sister, who smiles at me as in real life.*** *However, she seems much younger to*

me, about the way she was when she was 25. She died at the age of 54. The upper part of the head is surrounded by cloudy veils."

Following pages 72 we have some photos of the plaster molds that were made using the technique described above. They include the photos below (on the pages here, here, here and here):



These photographs seem to rule out all explanations such as that the observers were suffering from some hallucination when they reported the materializations they claimed to see. Hallucinations cannot be photographed. Referring to these plaster casts, the modern-day writer Leslie Kean tells us "they remain to this day in the Institut Metapyschique International in Paris," and on the page here she shows some photographs of such casts stored at this institute. The photo of a plaster foot she gives here matches the plaster cast foot shown on this page of Geley's 1922 book. The photo she gives of interlocking plaster hands matches the photo below of interlocking plaster hands. In 1923 Scientific American published an English account of how these casts were obtained. The account (entitled "Materialized Hands") can be read at this link.

Materialized Hands

The Franek Kluski Wax Molds, and the Conclusions that May be Drawn from Them

This was before publications such as Scientific American adopted their "head in the sand" ostrich policy of ignoring and censoring a hundred and one types of extremely important evidence about minds and psychic realities, basically choosing to never fairly discuss evidence conflicting with materialist dogmas.

Baron Ludwig von Guldenstubbe (1820-1873) was a Scandanavian nobleman of the 19th century who claimed to have observed a phenomena of spirit writing. You can read his main work on the topic here, but it is available only in French. So reading the book ("Pneumatologie positive et expérimentale. La réalité des esprits et le phénomène merveilleux de leur écriture directe") will require the English reader to use Google Translate.

Early in the book Guldenstubbe makes this claim:

"More than fifty people were able to observe the astonishing phenomenon of the direct writing of invisible geniuses, giving their paper themselves.

Here are the names of some eyewitnesses, most of whom witnessed several experiments:

M. Ravené, senior, owner of a fine picture gallery in Berlin;

Prince Leonide Galitzin, of Moscow;

Mr. Prince S. Metschersky;

Dr. Georgii, disciple of the illustrious Ling, now in London;

Colonel Toutcheff;

Dr. Bowron, in Paris;

M. Kiorboë, distinguished artist, in Paris, residing rue du Chemin de Versailles, 43;

Colonel de Kollmann, in Paris;

M. le Baron de Voigts-Rhetz;

Mr. Baron Borys d'Uexkull."

The first seven chapters of the book can be skipped over, since they do not deal with Guildenstubbe's observations. Finally in Chapter VIIII the Baron starts discussing his own observations. The author makes a specific claim about when such marvels started:

"No. 1. Figure traced on August 13, 1856, an ever-memorable day, when the author observed, for the first time, the marvelous phenomenon of the direct writing of spirits. This figure was drawn by a spirit in the author's dwelling, 74, rue du Chemin de Versailles on the Champs-Elysées, at three o'clock in the afternoon."

On the next page the Baron claims to have got on various dates writing "in lapidary Latin," "in lapidary ancient Greek," and also hieroglyphs. On page 80 the Baron claims to have got on various dates writing in English, writing in Estonian, and writing in Greek and Latin. Many similar pages follow. They keep describing various "spirit writings" which are numbered. At the back of the book, we see facsimiles of these writings.

In an article at Encyclopedia.com we read this about Guildenstubbe:

"*In August 1856 he began to experiment in the phenomenon of* ***direct writing*** *without the intervention of a medium. He placed paper and pencil in a small locked box, carrying the key with him. After 13 days he opened the box and found some written characters on the paper; the experiment was repeated successfully ten times on the same day."*

Much later on page 210 the Baron declares this in a triumphal fashion: "It seems that our task is fulfilled; we have proved in the first part of this volume, the reality of the supernatural world of the Spirits, by the experimental way, that is to say by a great number of repeated experiences of the direct writing of the Spirits, in the presence of fifty witnesses of sound mind and body."

You would think that if the Baron had such experiences, that no one in his family would claim to have seen something as astonishing. But according to the account below, one of the Baron's daughters claimed to have seen something even more astonishing: the bilocation of Emilie Sagee.

On page 40-43 of his book *Death and Its Mystery* by the astronomer Camille Flammarion, we have a detailed account of this case. According to Flammarion's account, 13 girls (one of them the Baron's second daughter) saw an apparition of a school teacher named Emilie Sagee, right next to her physical form, so that there was "one beside the other." "They were exactly alike, and going through the same movements," according to Flammarion, who states, "All the young girls, without exception, had seen the second form, and agreed perfectly in their description of the phenomenon." Later, according to his account, 42 pupils saw an apparition of Sagee in a school at the same time Sagee was also observed picking flowers in a garden -- as if there were two copies of Emilie Sagee. According to the pupils, the apparition "gradually vanished." Flammarion reports, "The forty-two pupils described the phenomenon in the same way." Such an observation may possibly be evidence for the idea that each of us has an "astral body" different from our physical body.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:57 AM No comments:

Labels: materialization, mediums, paranormal phenomena

Saturday, March 18, 2023

How to Test ESP or Telepathy Using Your Friends or Family Members

The experimental evidence for telepathy (also called extra-sensory perception or ESP) is very good. We have almost two hundred years of compelling evidence for the phenomenon of clairvoyance, a type of extrasensory perception occurring when a person is asked to describe something he cannot see and does not know about. It is not correct that serious study of this topic began about 1882 with the founding of the Society for Psychical Research in England, as often claimed. Serious rigorous investigation of the topic of clairvoyance dates back as far as 1825, with the 1825-1831 report of the Royal Academy of Medicine finding in favor of clairvoyance. Serious scholarly investigation of clairvoyance occurred many times between 1825 and 1882. Such investigations often involved subjects who were hypnotized, with many investigators reporting clairvoyance from hypnotized subjects or subjects who were in a trance. Experimental investigation of telepathy occurred abundantly in the twentieth century, with many university

investigators such as Joseph Rhine of Duke University reporting spectacular successes.

You can read up about some of the evidence for such things by reading some of my posts and free online books below:

- When Rhine and Pearce Got "Smoking Gun" Evidence for ESP
- Better Than a Smoking Gun: The Riess ESP Test
- ESP Evidence Breaches the Censorship of the Cornell Physics Paper Server
- Clairvoyance, ESP, Psychical Phenomena, Life After Death and the Unexplained
- Psychics and Paranormal Phenomena
- Uncanny Skills of the Trance Seers
- The Mystifying Mrs. Morel
- More Ladies of the Second Sight
- When Hypnotized Minds Read Minds
- Mrs. Croad and Five Similar Clairvoyants
- Miss M. Kept Passing Very Rigorous Tests of Clairvoyance

There is a simple way for you to test this subject yourself, by doing quick tests with your friends and family members. I report here on a quick and simple way of doing such tests that I have in recent months found to be highly successful, as I report in another post here. I have no idea whether you will get similar success yourself, but I would not be surprised if you do. Below are some suggestions:

(1) **Test ideally using family members or close friends**. I don't actually have any data showing that tests of this type are more likely to be successful using family members or close friends, but I can simply report that I have had much success testing with family members.

(2) **Ask the family member or friend to guess some unusual thing that you have seen with your eyes or seen in a dream**. Announce this simply as a guessing game, rather than some ESP or telepathy test. For example, you might say something like, "I saw something unusual today -- I'll give you four guesses to guess what it was." Or you might say, "I dreamed of something I rarely dream of -- I'll give you four guesses to guess what it was."

(3) **Do not give any clues about your guess target, or give only a very weak clue.** Your ESP test will be trying to find some case of a guess matching a guess target, with such a thing being extremely improbable. You will undermine such an attempt if you give any good clue, such as "I'm thinking of an animal" or "I'm thinking of something in our house." If you give a clue, give only a very weak one such as "I saw something unusual on my walk today, can you guess what it was," or "I had a dream about something I rarely dream of, can you guess what it was."

(4) **Be sure to suggest that the person try three or four guesses rather than a single guess**. In recent months I have noticed a strong "warm up" effect when occasionally trying tests like this, which I have done about every two weeks. I have noticed that the first guess someone makes usually fails, but that the second or third guess is often correct or close to the answer. For example, not long ago I said to one of my daughters, "You'll never guess what I saw down the street." I gave no clues, but asked her to guess. After a wrong guess of an orange cat, her second guess was "a raccoon," which is just what I saw. No one in our family has seen such a thing on our street before. Later in the day I asked her what I saw in a weird dream I recently had, mentioning only that it involved something odd in our front yard. After a wrong first guess of a snowman, she asked, "Was it a wild animal?" I said yes. Then she asked, "Was it an elephant?" I said yes.

(5) After the person makes the first guess, suggest that the person take 10 seconds before making each of the next guesses. Throughout the entire guessing session, you should be trying hard to visualize the thing you are asking the person to guess. Slowing the process down by suggesting 10 seconds between guesses may increase the chances of your thought traveling to the subject you are testing.

(6) Only test using a guess target that is some simple thing that you can clearly visualize in your mind. Do not test using a guess target of some complicated scene involving multiple actions or interacting objects. For example, don't ask someone to guess some scene you saw that involved someone dropping his coffee and spilling it on his feet. Use a guess target of some single object or a single animal or a single human. Testing with types of animals seems to work well. If the test object or animal has a strong color or some characteristic action, all the better. Do not test using some extremely common sights such as your family dog. Success with such a test will not be very impressive. It's better to use a rarer sight, maybe something you see as rarely as a donkey or a racoon.

(7) **Answer only yes or no questions, counting each question as one of the three or four allowed guesses.** You can include a single "You're getting warm" answer instead of a "no" answer, but no more than one.

(8) Very soon after the test, write down the results, recording all guesses and questions, and any responses you made such as "yes" or "no." With testing like this, the last thing you want to rely on is a memory of some event happening weeks ago. Write down the results of your test, positive or negative, within a few minutes of an hour of making the test.

(9) Do a single test (allowing three or four guesses) only about once every week or two weeks. There may be a significant fatigue factor in such tests. A person who does well on such a test may not continue to do well if you keep testing him on the same day. To avoid such fatigue and to avoid annoying people with too many tests, it is good to just suggest a casual test as described above, once every week or two weeks. Keep a long-term record of all tests of this type you have done, recording failures as well as successes.

(10) It's best not to announce the test as an ESP test or as a telepathy test, but to describe it as a quick guessing game or a test of chance. Our materialist professors have senselessly succeeded in creating very much unreasonable prejudice and bias against psychic realities that are well-established. So the mere act of announcing an ESP test may cause your subject to raise mental barriers that may prevent any successful result. To avoid that, it is best to describe your test as a quick guessing game or a test of chance.

(11) It's best to choose a guess target that you personally saw either in reality or in a dream. The more personal connection you have with the guess target, the better. Something that you personally saw recently (either in reality or a dream) may work better than something you merely chose randomly. The more your recent sensory experience of the guess target, the better it is. Choosing a guess target of something you both saw and touched may work better than something you merely saw. The more you have thought about the guess target, the better. It's better that the object have one or two colors than many colors, and the brighter the color is, the better.

(12) **Be cautious in publicly reporting successful results.** I would wait until you get three or four good successful tests before reporting anything about such tests on anything like social media. Also, avoid reporting your results as

evidence of anything, unless you have something very impressive to report. Social media has a horde of skeptics ready to attack you if you claim evidence for ESP based on slim results. A good rejoinder to such attacks is if you can say, "I'm not claiming anything, I'm just reporting what happened.

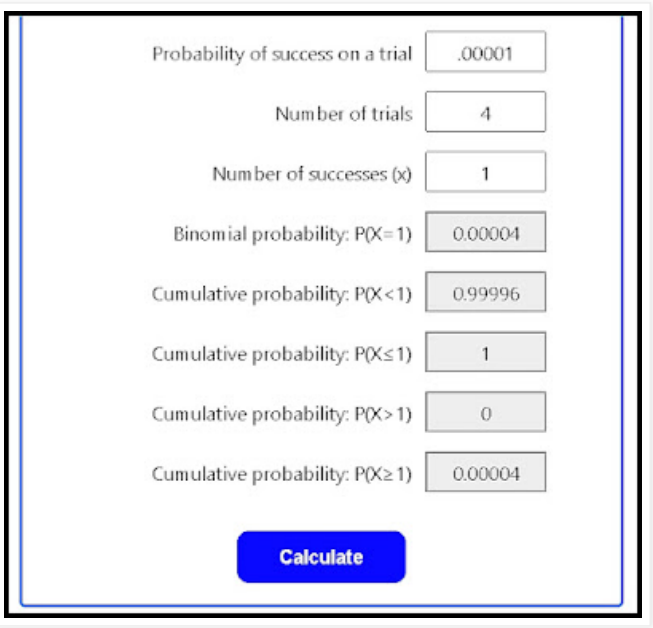
Guess targets that worked well in a telepathy test. Choose simple tangible targets with a distinct look, not abstract targets or scenes.

Above we see some guess targets that were successfully guessed after only a few guesses, in trials in which the guesser was not told that the item was an animal or anything living. There were about nine trials, with one or two other trials being unsuccessful, and one being a partial success. The guess targets were only in my mind, and I compiled the visual above only after these items were guessed correctly.

Tests that you do of this type will be unlikely to ever constitute any substantial contribution to the literature of parapsychology. But they may have the effect of helping you to realize or suspect extremely important truths about yourself and other human beings that you might never have realized. A person might read a dozen times about experiments suggesting something, but the truth of that thing may never sink in until that person has some first-hand experience with the thing.

Whether ESP or telepathy can occur is something of very high philosophical importance. There is a reason why materialists show a very dogmatic refusal to seriously study the evidence for telepathy. It is that if telepathy can occur, the core assumptions of materialism must be false. Telepathy could never occur between brains, but might be possible between souls. So any personal evidence you may get of the reality of telepathy can be a very important step in your philosophical journey towards better understanding what humans are, and what kind of universe we live in.

Using a binomial probability calculator it is possible to very roughly estimate the probability of getting success in a series of about nine tests like the one above. To use such a calculator, you have to have an estimate of the chance of success per trial. With tests like those I have suggested, it is hard to exactly estimate such a thing, because you are choosing a guess target that could be any of 100,000 different things. One reasonable approach would be to assume 100,000 different guess possibilities. The chance of a successful guess in only four guesses can be calculated like this, giving a result of only .00004.

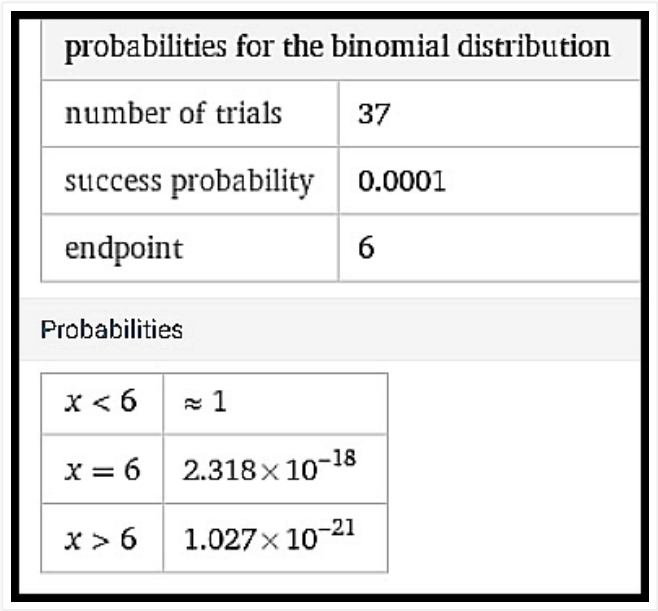


The screen above is using the StatTrek binomial probability calculator, which doesn't seem to work whenever the probability is much less than a million. A similar calculator is the Wolfram Alpha binomial probability calculator, which will work with very low probabilities. I used that calculator with the data described in my post here. The situation described in that post was:

- Each correct guess had a probability no greater than about 1 in 10,000, as I never mentioned the category of what was to be guessed, but always merely asked a relative to guess after saying something like "I saw something today, try and guess what it was" or "I dreamed of something today, try to guess what it was."
- Counting all questions asked (which were all "yes or no" questions) as a guess, there were in about nine guessing trials involving nine targets a total of about 37 guesses.

- Six times the guess target was correctly guessed within a few guesses, and one time the answer was wrong but close (with a final guess of a red bicycle rather than a red double-decker bus, both being red vehicles).

Counting the close guess as a failed attempt, I entered this data into the Wolfram Alpha binomial probability calculator, getting these results (with this calculator the "number of successes" is referred to as the "endpoint"):



probabilities for the binomial distribution	
number of trials	37
success probability	0.0001
endpoint	6

Probabilities

$x < 6$	≈ 1
$x = 6$	2.318×10^{-18}
$x > 6$	1.027×10^{-21}

Having a probability of less than about 1 in .0000000000000001, it would be very unlikely for anyone to ever get a result as successful by mere chance, even if every person on planet Earth were to try such a set of trials. You can use the same Wolfram Alpha binomial probability calculator to get a rough estimate of the likelihood of results you get.

I mention using a binomial probability calculator above, but just ignore such a thing if you find it confusing, because the use of such a calculator is just some optional "icing on the cake" that can be used after a successful series of tests. The point of the tests I suggest here is not to end up with some particular probability number, but mainly to end up with an impression in your mind of whether you were able to get substantive evidence that telepathy or mind reading is occurring. Such an impression may be a valuable clue that tends to point you in the right direction in developing a sound worldview. Some compelling personal experience with telepathy may save you from a lifetime of holding the widely taught but unfounded and untenable dogma that you are merely a brain or merely the result of some chemical activity in a brain. Getting such experience, you may embark on further studies leading you in the right direction. Keep in mind that a negative test never disproves telepathy, just

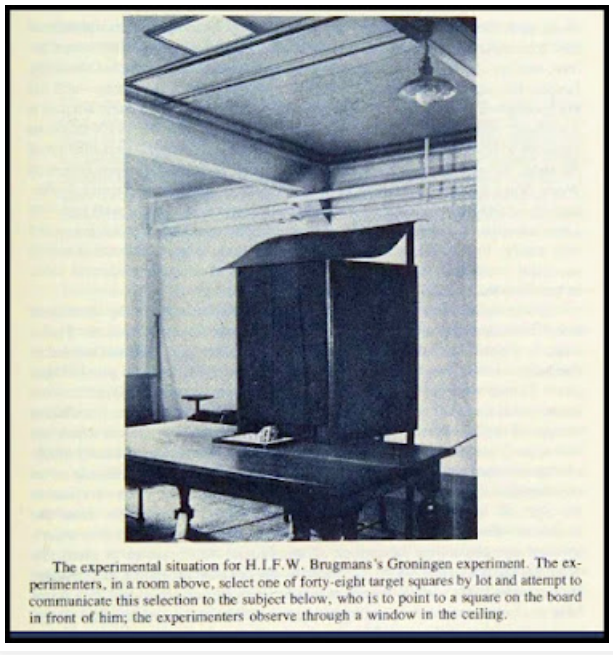
as failing to jump a one-meter hurdle does nothing to show that people can never jump one-meter hurdles.

In the academic literature of ESP testing, we often read about the use of Zener cards, cards in which there are five abstract symbols. While using such cards has the advantage of allowing precise estimates of probability, there is no particular reason to think that better results will be obtained when using such cards. To the contrary, it may be that impressive results are much less likely to be obtained using such cards, and that ESP tests work better when living or tangible guess targets are used such as a living animal or a tangible object.

A very important point I must reiterate is that when trying tests such as I have suggested, **it is crucial to allow for a second, third and fourth guess,** with at least ten seconds between guesses (during which the person thinking of the guess target tries to visualize the guess target). In my testing the correct guesses tend to come on the second, third or fourth try.

The results mentioned above are not by any means the best result I have got in a personal ESP test. The beginning of my very interesting post "Spookiest Observations: A Deluxe Narrative" describes a much more impressive result I got long ago, in a different type of test than the type of test described above.

Postscript: The book *The Elusive Science* discusses how H. I. F. W. Brugmans reported in 1921 a remarkable success in an ESP experiment. A subject named Van Dam was asked to guess which of 48 spaces on a grid had been selected by researchers in a room above him. In 187 trials he had 60 successes, even though by chance he should have had only 4. Using the Wolfram Alpha binomial probability calculator to calculate the chance of such success, we get a number of less than 1 in 10 to the fiftieth power, which is less than 1 in a trillion quadrillion quintillion. The experimental setup is shown below. The experimenters looked through a window in the ceiling to see which squares in the grid Van Dam selected.



The experimental situation for H.I.F.W. Brugmans's Groningen experiment. The experimenters, in a room above, select one of forty-eight target squares by lot and attempt to communicate this selection to the subject below, who is to point to a square on the board in front of him; the experimenters observe through a window in the ceiling.

The same book tells us the following, referring to the paper here (and referring to tests in which one success out of 5 is expected by chance):

"At Earlham College in Indiana research into parapsychology was carried on in 1936/37 by John A. Clark, a professor of philosophy, and Betty M. Humphrey, a sophomore philosophy major. They discovered an outstanding subject who achieved an overall average of 8.26 per 25 guesses in 9,500 trials and, contrary to other experiences, had a higher rate of success on group experiments than on individual ones."

Plugging such results into the Wolfram Alpha binomial probability calculator gives us the likelihood below, one that we would not expect to see by chance if a billion trillion planets were each filled with billions of people taking ESP tests:

probabilities for the binomial distribution	
number of trials	9500
success probability	0.2
endpoint	3138

Probabilities

$x < 3138$	≈ 1
$x = 3138$	2.784×10^{-195}
$x > 3138$	2.857×10^{-195}

The book-length document "Extrasensory Perception: Research Findings" by John Palmer discusses an abundance of evidence for the paranormal. The whole document can be conveniently read using the link here. On page 143 the document refers to a child who did exceptionally well on as ESP test in which telepathy between himself and his mother was tested. We are told the child did almost as well as the subject of the Riess ESP test (discussed here), a test involving professor Riess and a subject in a different building. In the Riess test the expected chance result per session was only 5 correct guesses. But the woman guessed an average of 18.24 cards correctly per 25 cards, achieving a phenomenal 73% accuracy rate (instead of the expected accuracy rate of 20%). This was the result in "Series A" of two series of tests with the young woman. So if the boy did almost as well as the subject of the Riess test, his results must have been spectacular.

Looking for the paper about this child's test ("An Unusual Case of Extra-Sensory Perception), I am able to find only the first page. We read this:

"An eleven-year-old boy, physically retarded and with an I.Q. of 55, was found to repeat spontaneously words and numbers thought of by his mother but not overtly expressed.
The boy responded with unusual accuracy when prompted by the mother. ESP cards were utilized with similar results."

This is more evidence suggesting that ESP results can be much higher when testing occurs between family members.

Posted by Mark Mahin at 7:40 AM No comments:

Labels: ESP, how to test telepathy using family members, paranormal phenomena

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